

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JANUARY 2006

State

MAGAZINE



Walk the WALK

Embassy Information Management Officer Dan Siebert, center, set up this computer lab. He and other Americans volunteer their time to help Lesotho move forward.



IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: Lesotho—Kingdom in the Sky

State MAGAZINE

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A palm-lined path of the East Parque Central in downtown Ciudad Juarez.

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ON THE COVER

Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Under Secretary Henrietta Fore and employees take a power walk with their free pedometers to promote the Healthier Feds program.
Photo by Michael Gross

DIRECT FROM THE D.G.

AMBASSADOR W. ROBERT PEARSON



Accomplishments and Challenges

I would like to offer my best wishes to you and your family members for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2006. The New Year is always a good opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and look ahead to the challenges of the coming year.

In the two-plus years of my tenure as Director General, I am pleased to report that, working together, we have put in place a number of building blocks that fully support the Secretary's vision of transformational diplomacy and better prepare us to meet the demands of diplomacy in the 21st Century. Under the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative, we hired a large number of highly qualified people into both the Civil Service and the Foreign Service. At the same time, we developed new recruiting strategies to get the skills and diversity we need.

Like all agencies, we have finite resources. Since we do not have reserve units around the country the way the armed forces do, we have transformed the Foreign Service and the Department as a whole into a Readiness Reserve, a corps that we can draw on to meet whatever need arises, whenever it arises. We are also staffing the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, the first of its kind, to lead and manage the USG civilian response in post-conflict situations or where USG action may help prevent conflict.

To keep track of our skills and talents and improve our ability to respond, we created Employee Profile Plus (EP+), a Department-wide inventory of skills in 285 categories, including languages, for all our Civil Service and Foreign Service personnel and annuitants. We are planning to expand EP+ to also include family members of Foreign Service employees overseas and Foreign Service National employees. EP+ allows us to quickly identify those with the skills needed to meet any emergency.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we needed Lao, Vietnamese and Khmer speakers who could work closely with the various ethnic fishing communities in the southern United States to give assistance to them. Because of EP+, the Department could quickly and effectively meet that need. No other foreign affairs agency has this capability.

We have established a Career Development Program that allows Foreign Service employees to gather regional expertise, increase foreign language competency and build upon

skills that they brought in with them. The combination of broadened experience and enhanced skills is designed to prepare us for the challenges of a constantly changing world.

I am particularly pleased that we are beginning to make real inroads into a topic that has vexed the Foreign Service for a number of years—employment for our spouses overseas. In addition to improving the opportunities for work within our missions, we are also looking outside to the wider community. We are providing new types of support for family members seeking employment—from culturally specific resume writing to referrals and workshops. These innovative programs are now providing services in 32 countries. We have also launched pilot programs to provide training to family members on starting up web-based businesses and professional fellowships to family members.

I am pleased that our very successful Civil Service Mentoring program has grown to nearly 400 participants. In addition, a number of our Civil Service colleagues are participating in a range of leadership development programs, congressional fellowships and academic training opportunities. Since many of our Civil Service colleagues will soon be eligible to retire, we have been aggressively recruiting new talent through two very well known federal intern programs: the Federal Career Intern Program, called the Career Entry Program at State, and the Presidential Management Fellowship Program. Both are intensive two-year training programs that are intended to groom the next generation of Civil Service leaders.

Our Foreign Service National employees form the backbone of our operation abroad and will play a key role as we move toward the Secretary's goals. In light of their work, we have made permanent the annual FSN conference, which allows our most talented employees to contribute to our implementation strategies and in turn receive updates on our initiatives. In response to feedback during these conferences, we have created retirement alternatives at selected posts and are working on the feasibility of a global supplemental defined contribution plan.

We recognize that there is a lifetime relationship between our retirees and the Department, and we are making significant efforts to maintain that relationship. In May, we launched RNet, a secure Internet-based retirement program that allows us to better serve the needs of our retirees and to tap into their expertise. We now deliver electronic pay statements to all interested retirees. We are counting on everyone to help us advance our transformational diplomacy.

With your advice, help and support, I am confident that substantial progress will continue to be realized as we look ahead together to the new year. ■

Helping Retirees

As a person who'll retire next year, I've been positively impressed by the initiatives such as RNet to better serve retirees and give them access to information. I'm prompted to express overdue thanks for these new services by the sidebar in the November issue about efforts to contact and assist retirees in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Bravo to all involved. It was the right and caring decision. Thank you also for reporting the news. It was the first I had heard of it.

Now once I get to Florida...

Joan McKniff

Deputy Director
African Regional Services
Paris, France

Problems with RNet

I read with great interest your recent article on RNet. Unfortunately, there appear to be many problems with opening an account online. My attempts to obtain assistance to register included repeated calls to the Office of Retirement that resulted in being placed on hold for long periods

of time or having the call transferred to persons unfamiliar with RNet. Trying to report my problems online, per the instructions on the RNet site, resulted in an automated error message. Hopefully, others are not experiencing the same difficulties.

G.L. DeSalvo

Foreign Service Retiree

David Dlouhy, director of the Office of Retirement and administrator of the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund, responds:

Since the launch of the RNet Personal Account feature and the release of Annuitant Employee Express, we have been deluged with requests for service. The Office of Retirement has responded to thousands of requests for assistance from retirees setting up new accounts. Obviously, we hit the mark in offering this service, since access to annuity statements and the WAE global registry has induced many Department retirees to establish their personal accounts on the RNet web site. Although there are a lot more computer savvy retirees than might be realized, we have been able to

assist a large number of retirees to come online. We are dealing with technical issues on a one-on-one basis, preferably over the phone, to walk retirees through the process. Regrettably, this is time-consuming and resulted in a delayed response time during the first few weeks. For these delays, we offer our sincere apologies.

The RNet web site is a Human Resources web site with extensive security controls, backed by an authentication system to ensure that only those eligible are able to establish and access accounts. RNET was designed to Department guidelines, optimized for Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or newer. The software development team has been extremely helpful in making it accessible to MAC users with OS-X 10.3 or newer operating system and the Safari Browser. They are still working on compatibility with other browsers such as Mozilla, AOL and Netscape.

We are delighted and sometimes overwhelmed with the response to our initiatives to deliver better retirement services. In those cases where we do not get it right, we will fix it and get the system to where we all want it to be.

FROM THE EDITOR

They traveled from far and near to the elegant Benjamin Franklin Room and to the 2005 Department Awards Day. One hustled straight from the airport, lugging baggage and ticket stubs. The setting in the room named for the Father of the American Foreign Service was appropriate, as the Department honored the best and brightest of Mr. Franklin's diplomatic descendants.

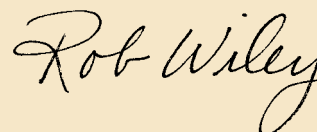
A 2,000-mile border stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico requires a lot of care and service, and the 400-plus employees at the five U.S. consulates provide that, and more. They provide the usual services to one of the largest communities of American citizens living abroad while dealing with critical bilateral issues related to counterterrorism.

The Office of Career Development and Assignments manages a global personnel system that makes about 3,000 assignments each year. Our behind the scenes look at this complex operation shows how the office works

constantly to make the process transparent, fair and efficient for all concerned.

Many employees are too busy doing their jobs to think about managing their careers. The professionals at the Career Development Resource Center are working to change that because in the modern workplace, employees must make important career decisions every day.

What do you know about mentoring at the State Department? The civil service mentoring coordinator notes that the program has grown by almost 10-fold since its inception in 2001, and she dispels some of the myths and highlights some of the magic of mentoring in the Department.



The Price OF PEACE



Fallen Diplomats Honored on 10th Anniversary of Bosnian Peace

As part of a November 22 commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Dayton Accords, which ended the Bosnian war, Secretary Condoleezza Rice paid tribute to three U.S. diplomats who died in 1995 to make peace possible.

“Robert Frasure, Joseph Kruzel and Nelson Drew gave their lives to help others escape the miseries of war,” she said at a wreath-laying ceremony at the memorial plaque in the

C Street lobby. Family members of the fallen diplomats were present, as were former Secretary Madeleine Albright, former National Security Adviser Sandy Berger and former United Nations Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, the architect of the accords.

Secretary Rice called Mr. Frasure “a tough negotiator, a trusted friend and a beloved mentor to so many members of our State Department family.” She said Mr. Kruzel “worked tirelessly to integrate Eastern Europe into the West after the Iron Curtain fell.” And she praised Mr. Drew as a warrior and diplomat “who distinguished himself as a keen intellect and with his poise under pressure.” She said the three “did not live long enough to see the achievement of peace at Dayton, but they imagined the promise of peace and they laid its foundation.”

Bosnian Tri-Presidency Chairman Ivo Miro Jovic said that “thanks to them, Bosnia today lives a normal life, a life where people can achieve peace and a normal lifestyle.”

After the ceremony, Secretary Rice met with top Bosnian officials and then joined Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic in signing a Status of Forces agreement, which allows U.S. access to Bosnian facilities, and an Open Skies civil aviation agreement.

Above: Secretary Rice speaks at the wreath-laying ceremony. To her left are Bosnian Tri-Presidency Chairman Ivo Miro Jovic and Department protocol officer Lawrence Dunham.

RENOVATED EMBASSY GRANTED HISTORIC STATUS

At 65, the U.S. Embassy in Manila's chancery recently received historic status designation by the National Historic Institute of the Philippines.

This status caps a five-year renovation and historical research project that has transformed the chancery from an old office building into a significant national historical treasure, which now serves as an important tool of cultural diplomacy. Newly restored historic monuments and selected paintings bring the complex to life and highlight the deep ties between the United States and the Philippines.

"We have received many compliments on the renovation project and the newly landscaped gardens," said Virginia Foster, curator of historical collections at the embassy.

The chancery has an interesting history. It originally served, from 1940 to 1942, as the U.S. High Commissioner and High Commissioner's Residence. From 1942 to 1945, it was the

headquarters and offices for Japanese military officers. During 1945 and 1946, the still intact ballroom of the heavily damaged building served as the courtroom for World War II



The renovated Charles Parsons Ballroom offers one of many elegant views of the historic chancery.

war crimes trials. In 1946, once the Philippines received its independence, it became the U.S. Embassy.

State Executives Receive Presidential Rank Awards

The Department was well represented among Senior Executive Service career members who were recently honored for exceptional service to the American people over an extended period. These executives are outstanding leaders who consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry and a relentless commitment to public service.

Thomas Fingar, who served as assistant secretary of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, was named a distinguished executive, a rank that is awarded for extraordinary accomplishments.

Mark A. Clodfelter, Michael G. Kozak, Christine H. Liu, Margaret M. Philbin, Daniel A. Reifsnyder, Marc J. Susser, William E. Todd and William R. Wood were named meritorious executives, a rank that is awarded for sustained accomplishments.

Distinguished executives receive a cash award of 35 percent of base pay. Meritorious executives receive 20 percent of base pay. All recipients receive a signed certificate from the President.



Entry-Level Officers Featured in U.S.–Lao Relations Seminar

Last year, the United States and Laos celebrated 50 years of unbroken diplomatic relations. In conjunction with the celebration, Embassy Vientiane presented a seminar on U.S.–Lao relations at the Lao Foreign Affairs Institute.

The seminar, held in late summer, brought together Embassy personnel and more than 50 entry- and mid-level staff from the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Committee for Planning and Investment and various other ministries and government agencies. Ambassador Patricia Haslach and MFA Deputy Director General Bounnheuang Songnavong gave introductory remarks and then turned the program over to three embassy entry-level officers.

Consular Officer Phil Nervig discussed the history of the bilateral relationship and the legacy of the war in Indochina. He noted that there were 560 Americans listed as missing in action in Laos at the end of the war. In 1985, the U.S. military, with the assistance of the Lao government, began joint programs to search for MIA remains. To date, the U.S. has recovered and identified 188 sets of remains and repatriated them with full military honors to Hawaii to await forensic identification.

Laos remains the most heavily bombed country per capita in history, Mr. Nervig said, and experts estimate that 10 to 30 percent of all bombs dropped during the war did not explode on impact. As a result, more than 11,000 deaths have been attributed to unexploded ordnance accidents since 1975 and economic development in many parts of the country has been hindered. U.S. has provided assistance for ordnance removal and community awareness programs, he said.

Political-Consular Officer Terry Mobley discussed the role of the embassy's Narcotics Affairs Section, which works closely with the Lao government on crop control, law enforcement and demand reduction projects throughout Laos, as well as rural development assistance.

He also discussed the opportunities for increased trade and investment and highlighted the U.S. government's focus on human rights, religious freedom and human trafficking.

General Services Officer Erin Sawyer mentioned the establishment of the Lao-American Center, the cornerstone of Embassy outreach to young people in Laos, which serves as

an information clearinghouse on all aspects of American life and provides access to English language study materials, U.S. periodicals and the Internet.

The presentation was part of Embassy Vientiane's mentoring and development plan for entry-level professionals, which is designed to develop and hone the skills needed for a successful Foreign Service career. All ELPs take advantage of a variety of leadership and management opportunities, including serving as control officer, participating in crisis management training, speaking in public and serving on embassy committees.

Work rotations, post exchanges and temporary duty assignments are encouraged by senior management in Vientiane. ELPs have worked in other sections and traveled to other embassies and consulates in the region for consultations, conferences and other opportunities to share best practices.



The seminar organizers pose in front of the embassy. From left, Erin Sawyer, Terry Mobley and Phil Nervig.

Attacks, Kidnappings Don't Deter Contractor of the Year

The recipient of the Department's 11th annual Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year Award is Framaco International, Inc., which completed an Iraq project under difficult circumstances.

The Department's contract with Framaco International was for the design and construction of improvements to the interim embassy facilities in Baghdad. Framaco was cited for accomplishing this vital work despite the challenges of operating in a hostile environment. The work sites came under

mortar attack and some Framaco workers were kidnapped by insurgents. Fortunately, they were later released.

Despite these obstacles, the Framaco team worked aggressively around the clock, seven days a week, completing the project 10 days ahead of schedule and within budget.

The award, sponsored by the assistant secretary for Administration, recognizes small business contractors who have displayed exemplary performance, customer service, management and technical capabilities.

Advisory Council Helps Protect the Private Sector Abroad

In May 2004, terrorists attacked three compounds housing several U.S. oil companies in Saudi Arabia in less than an hour. The attack was the second in a month to target the country's oil industry, and the fourth of six deadly attacks on Western targets in Saudi Arabia in a year. But this time, one company in particular was prepared.

A security officer for the company had recently attended an Overseas Security Advisory Council Country Council meeting in Riyadh, where council members discussed ways of improving security in light of the recent terrorist attacks. OSAC, administered by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, is the U.S. Government's primary conduit for sharing security information with the U.S. private sector overseas.

On the day of the attack, terrorists entered the compound and overpowered an unarmed guard. They entered one of the offices and began shooting at Westerners. But they couldn't break down the doors of one company. The doors had been reinforced, thanks to recommendations made by members of the OSAC Riyadh Country Council.

While terrorists continued to round up hostages and kill Westerners, employees of some of the U.S. companies hunkered down inside the compound. To keep the companies and their frightened employees informed of developments during the siege, OSAC relayed information between intelligence sources and the companies, said Special Projects and Threat Coordinator Billy Alfano. The terrorists were never able to break into the building that had reinforced doors.

"OSAC is an organization that has helped save many lives over the years," said Diplomatic Security service director and OSAC co-chair Joe Morton. In the 20 years since Secretary of State George Schultz founded OSAC, it has helped make Americans living and working abroad more secure, he said.

As attacks against the U.S. private sector overseas become more frequent, OSAC is playing a growing role in keeping American business and their employees safe and secure, said OSAC Executive Director Doug Allison. OSAC, a public/private partnership, supplies a wealth of security information to its 3,200 constituents, who come from businesses, academia, nongovernment and faith-based organizations. This information allows the constituents to make informed security decisions..

OSAC is an information-sharing forum. It has a 34-member governing board based in Washington, D.C., and 106 country-level councils worldwide where members from the private and public sectors meet to discuss local security issues. The country councils are supported by U.S. Embassy regional security officers and other mission personnel.

"You pass information to the private sector, and they take action to address the threat," said OSAC Deputy Executive Director Scott Campbell. OSAC passes on information about serious threats against overseas organizations about four to five times a week.

"In the past four years, our global partnership for security has taken the shape of fighting a global war on terrorism, and all around the world OSAC is doing its part," said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the keynote speaker at OSAC's recent 20th anniversary celebration and security briefing. More than 850 members gathered for the November briefing in the State Department's Dean Acheson Auditorium.

"At the Olympic Games in Athens, for example, OSAC provided a nonstop stream of real-time threat assessments that helped protect our athletes and our citizens," the Secretary said. "And after the London terrorist bombings this summer, it took OSAC a mere four hours to distribute essential security information

across its vast global network. These and other OSAC successes are essential to our security."

In the past year, OSAC analysts provided an average of 288 security consultations per month to its members and sent out daily electronic reports on the security conditions in regions throughout the globe. The threat information OSAC collects is passed on to Regional Security Officers at posts overseas, who share the information with the private sector.

Within the Department, OSAC is the organization responsible for passing threat-related information to the private sector, said Allison. One of OSAC's most important functions is to disseminate information beyond the local level so that others who might be affected are made aware of threats, Allison emphasized, noting that a threat in one country often relates to a threat in another country.

"Ninety percent of the face of the United States abroad is the private sector," he said. "These are the people who engage the local population and win the hearts and minds of others. They are our ambassadors, and we need to do everything we can to help them do their jobs."



Secretary Rice praises OSAC at its 20th anniversary celebration.

Bosnia Seminar Focuses on Health Care for Aging Populations

The medical unit at the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, the Office of Defense Cooperation State Partnership Program, the Ministry of Health of Canton Sarajevo and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Family Medicine Program recently presented a three-day seminar for local physicians, nurses and social workers. The theme was “Healthy Aging—A Team Approach.”

Inspired by Regional Medical Officer William Green of the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, the project was viewed as a way to support the medical reform movement in this post-communist state, and to promote democratization as Bosnia struggles with self-government following the devastating war of the 1990s.

Specialists in the field of geriatric medicine—Edward Eckenfels, Peter DeGolia and Cynthia Balina—volunteered their time and came from the United States. The Bosnian participants included family physicians, nurses and social workers—30 in all—who work as teams in the public health system of Canton Sarajevo. They are part of the Family Medicine Program, which exemplifies a shift in how health care is oriented and delivered, under the leadership of Dr. Zaim Jatic.

The Family Medicine Program incorporates health promotion and disease prevention, along with social and psychological factors, in its services, with referral to specialists as needed. The program hopes to improve the quality of life of Bosnians by making access to health services easier and more effective.

Some of the topics discussed were normal aging versus pathophysiologic changes, dementia, depression, palliative care, cancer screening, diabetes, hypertension, caregiver fatigue, fall prevention and home safety.

The American visitors were pleased to learn that the Bosnians are quite advanced in the use of interdisciplinary

teams—management of each geriatric patient by a physician/nurse/social worker unit. Ordinary citizens have few material resources, but they have tight family structures that most often provide care at home for aging members. One topic proposed for further development was adult day care centers where seniors would socialize and be supervised, giving the working family caregiver a small break.



Ambassador Douglas McElhaney, left, visited the seminar and talks here with Dr. Jatic.

Dr. Jatic said he and his Bosnian colleagues agreed that it was a successful and practical seminar. They were introduced to the concept of healthy aging. Modern teaching methods, such as brainstorming and role playing, showed them how care of the elderly is organized in the United States and emphasized the significance of preventive activities such as home safety, fall prevention, careful use of medications and immunizations.

Library Merger Enhances Service and Strengthens Law Collection

The Office of the Legal Adviser and the Bureau of Administration recently merged the Law Library with the Ralph J. Bunche Library.

Merging the collections, staff and services of the two libraries consolidates library services and reduces redundancies.

Service enhancements realized by the merger include:

- Centralized and expanded expert reference and research services;
- Centralized location for an expanded library collection, which now includes a strong component in the area of international and comparative law;

- Department-wide online access to a merged collection of library resources through a state-of-the-art online catalog;
- Centralized procurement for both print and electronic resources;
- Centralized management of electronic resources;
- Library orientation and training on complex legal and foreign affairs electronic and print resources.

The Ralph J. Bunche Library is located in Room 3239 of the Harry S Truman building.

The Bunche Electronic Library can be found online at <http://buncheelectroniclibrary.state.gov/default.asp?cat=ALib>.

Conference Explores New Directions in Africa Policy

The 2005 Bureau of African Affairs Entry Level Professional Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, took as its theme “Innovations in Diplomacy.” The October conference, which brought together 80-plus generalists and specialists from 30 posts across the region, focused on building careers in the Department and the future of U.S. diplomacy in Africa.

Panels and speakers addressed new directions in policy toward Africa in areas such as media relations, education, humanitarian and development assistance, HIV/AIDS and military affairs.

In her keynote speech, Ambassador Ruth A. Davis connected the U.S. civil rights movement to Africa’s democratization. Dr. Tadesse Wuhib, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Ethiopia, described the role CDC is playing in reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS infection across the continent. U.S. Agency for International Development Acting Deputy Director R. Douglass Arbuckle discussed the danger of dependency on foreign assistance and the hope that current aid policy can assist nations in managing their own resources. An African Union panel detailed that

organization’s efforts to combat poverty, promote good governance and encourage peace and security.

Other speakers included Addis Ababa Chargé d’Affaires Vicki Huddleston, Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration Frank Coulter, Director of AF/E Eunice Reddick, Director of HR/CDA/EL Dean Haas, Regional Consular Officer Charles Wintheiser and AFSA Vice President Steve Kashkett. Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Maura Harty, Director General W. Robert Pearson and Chief Information Officer Jay N. Anania joined the conference via digital videoconference. In addition, Rick Welebir and Amy Johnston of FSI’s School of Leadership and Management conducted leadership training for participants.

Career issues addressed included changes to the Foreign Service personnel landscape, constructively expressing dissent, the role of gender in a Foreign Service career and work-life balance.

Attendees expressed satisfaction with the range of skills they are developing in Africa, noting that with its large number of small posts, African Affairs offers opportunities to work in several different capacities and in multiple career cones. The diversity of countries within the region provides entry-level professionals with a wide choice of cultures, languages and jobs.

EMBASSY RESPONDS TO COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS

After Hungary’s accession to the European Union in May 2004, competition for Hungarian students heated up. One poster, in particular, appeared in many school hallways—“Students from EU countries pay NO tuition at Scottish Universities.”

Recognizing that the ground had shifted, the public affairs and consular sections in the U.S. Embassy in Budapest developed a plan to compete for qualified students.

The consular section immediately eliminated the requirement for an appointment for all J-1 and F-1 student visa applicants. Then consular officers increased their visits to Hungarian high schools and universities and added a student visa component to every outreach event. Ambassador George H. Walker wrote an op-ed piece for Hungary’s top-circulation daily. He and others took every opportunity to encourage study in the United States.

With the help of intern Andrew Herther, the embassy developed a promotional package and sent it to every high school and university in

Hungary—1,400 schools—at the beginning of this academic year. The Regional Program Office in Vienna printed brochures, posters and other promotional materials and maintains templates for use by other interested missions.

To view the posters and brochures and to modify them for individual post use, contact Veronika Sperl at sperlvx@state.gov.



Consular Officer Anne Benjaminson speaks with students at a school fair.

The border crossing into Mexico at Tijuana is a high volume gateway for traffic both to and from Mexico.



POST OF THE MONTH



MEXICO BORDER CONSULATES

SHARING A COMMON AND ENGAGED CULTURE

**By Michael E. Kelly,
May Baptista,
Damien Hinckley
and Susan M. Walsh**



Above: Ciudad Juarez staff dons red, white and blue for a 4th of July celebration. Below: Busy Nuevo Laredo, with San Antonio to the north and Monterey to the south, is a vital port for the great flow of commerce between the U.S. and Mexico.

Thanks to the North American Free Trade Agreement, growing cultural and business ties and a sea change in attitudes in both countries, the U.S.-Mexico relationship has changed dramatically. And this change has been positive for both Americans and Mexicans. Many knowledgeable Americans asked to name our southern neighbor's largest employer would probably guess "PEMEX," the state-owned oil company. They would be wrong. The correct answer: Wal-Mart. This close and positive relationship may be new to Washington, D.C., and Mexico, D.F., but along the 2,000-mile border the two peoples have always shared a common and engaged culture.

In a recent speech, Ambassador Tony Garza said, "No other country impacts the U.S. quite like Mexico does...and no other country is so intertwined with the U.S. and its people at such a basic level."

This is nowhere more obvious than along the porous border, across which flow great commerce and more than a million people every day—legally and illegally. Obstacles such as narcotics trafficking, illegal migration and drug-related violence slow but do not stop educational exchanges, business initiatives, expansion of commerce and legal migration. The many Department of State personnel working at U.S. consulates along the southern border lead the charge against these obstacles.

The region is home to five U.S. consulates spanning the breadth of the border from west to east, with Tijuana on the

Pacific Ocean, Nogales on the fringe of the Sonoran Desert, Ciudad Juarez in the Chihuahuan Desert, Nuevo Laredo in the arid plains fronting the eastern Sierra Madre and Matamoros on the Gulf of Mexico. Together, the five consulates employ approximately 44 civil servants, 60 Foreign Service officers and 310 local staff. In addition to the consulates, four consular agents at active border-crossing points provide basic services to Americans traveling abroad.

COLORFUL HISTORY

The border is a single region, geographically, economically and culturally. These border posts are steeped in the



colorful and often violent history of the forging of two great nations; they are characterized by deep-rooted, generation-spanning relationships with sister cities across the border.

Situated in gateway cities where spurs of the Pan-American Highway cross into the United States, bringing people and products from all across Mexico, the posts offer easy access to nearby metropolitan areas as well as pristine natural settings on both sides of the border. Despite their critical and sensitive locations, the border posts remain some of the Department's best-kept secrets.

The scenic beauty of the Baja Peninsula provides the backdrop for Tijuana, just across the border from San Diego. For Nogales, sharing the border with the Arizona city of the same name, Phoenix is just a stretch up the road, and the resort community of Puerto Penasco in Mexico is also easily accessible. Ciudad Juarez, the gateway to the rustic beauty of west Texas and beyond, has as its neighbor the sprawling metropolis of El Paso. Nuevo Laredo, across the Rio Bravo from its sister city, Laredo, Texas, is centrally located between San Antonio to the north and Monterey to the south, offering easy access to the amenities of both cities. Matamoros, sharing the Gulf Coast with Brownsville, offers easy access to the beautiful beaches of South Padre Island and Corpus Christi farther to the north.

Because of the choice locations, the range of activities available is boundless. The proximity to the United States has also meant unexcelled work and educational opportunities for family members. While local opportunities for employment abound, many spouses choose to cross the border on a near-daily basis to work. Likewise, children can enroll in U.S. public or private schools without having to live away from home.

These five border consulates offer the full range of traditional consular services and perform extensive economic and political reporting, including keeping a keen eye on maquiladoras (assembly plants) and local government. Not the least of the services provided by the border consulates is processing visas for Mexicans and other foreigners wishing to enter the United States.

Foremost, however, the border posts are tasked with providing American-citizen services to the vast American population residing in each consular district. The task is all the more difficult since the American citizens, or Amcits, are well integrated into local populations.

In addition to the resident Amcits, there are also large numbers of traveling Americans who find themselves in distress or, for various reasons, incarcerated. More than 20 percent of all Amcits arrested outside the United States are arrested in Tijuana, making the consulate ACS section the busiest in the world. As a preventive measure, Matamoros, a popular spring break destination for American college students, published guidelines on how to enjoy a visit to Mexico while also observing local laws and regulations.

BORDER SECURITY

Located at busy crossing points along the expansive U.S.-Mexico border, these posts are further defined by the vast

AT A GLANCE



Country name: Mexico

Capital: Mexico City

Government: Federal republic

Independence: September 16, 1810
(from Spain)

Religions: Predominately Roman Catholic
and Protestant

Population: 106 million

Total area: 1,972,550 square kilometers

Approximate size: Slightly less than three
times the size of Texas

Currency: Mexican peso (MXN)

Per capita income: \$9,600

Population below poverty line: 40 percent

Literacy rate: 92.2 percent

SOURCE: CIA World Factbook 2005

Right: Consulate staffers greet guests during the 4th of July event at the principal officer's residence in Nogales. Below left: David Stewart, Consul General in Tijuana, reads to children from an orphanage adopted by the Consulate with assistance from the Kirby Simon Trust. Below right: The Plaza Principal is popular public space in Matamoros. Behind the square stands the City Cathedral Nuestra Senora del Refugio, meaning Our Lady of Sanctuary.



volume of goods and people who transit the area daily. As a result, the border posts play a pivotal role in border security by combating alien smuggling, drug and arms trafficking, money laundering and the still unsolved murders of hundreds of Mexican women in the area around Ciudad Juarez. This role has been augmented as a result of the dramatic events of Sept. 11, 2001.

The consulates have now taken on a broader mission of working on critical bilateral issues relating to counterterrorism. Central to this mission, the consulates assume vital liaison roles between Mexican and U.S. authorities at the local, state and federal levels. They are in the middle of these activities, not simply arrayed across the front line in the battle for a more secure border.

There are new initiatives affecting these border posts that will continue to redefine missions, workloads and lifestyles. The latest border program is the Western Hemisphere Travel

Initiative, which will require that by the end of 2007 all residents and visitors carry a passport or other approved secure travel document to cross the border.

The program will coincide with the beginning of the re-issuance cycle for the laser visa program, which originated nearly 10 years ago. As a result, large numbers of resident U.S. citizens will be seeking passports for their daily crossings at the same time that staggering numbers of local nationals will be applying to renew their laser visas.

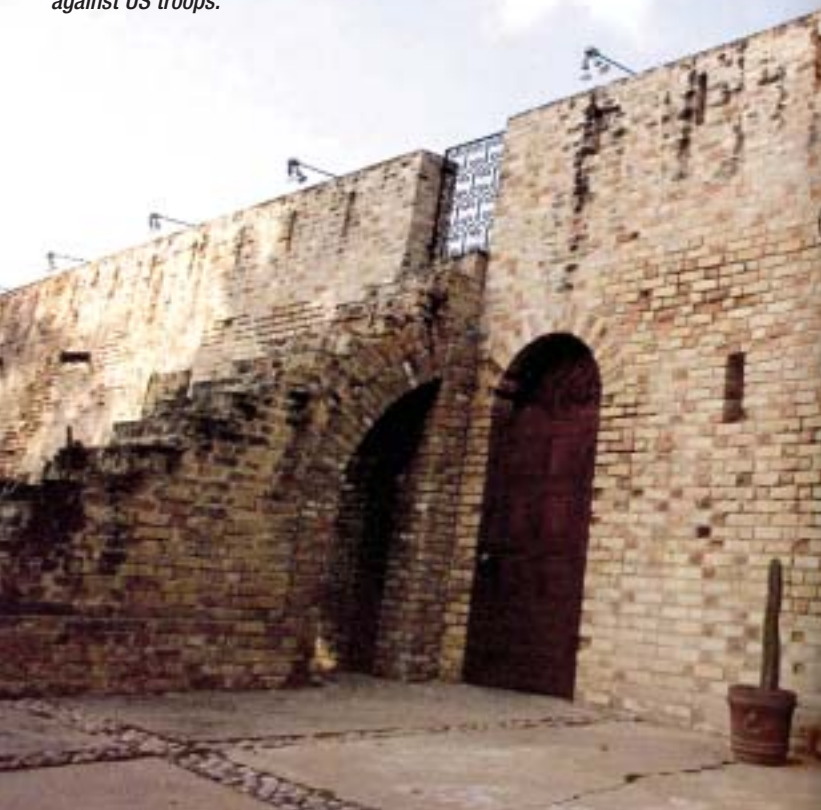
Though daunting, the border posts' flexibility and resilience make them well suited for the task. For example, Ciudad Juarez, which processes more immigrant visas than any other consulate or embassy in the world, is planning a new facility for 2008, in part to handle the increase in workload due to these initiatives. The border posts are also monitoring White House and legislative proposals relating to immigration reform and a new type of program for Mexicans willing to work

to legalize their status. This legislation may also have an impact on the consulates' future workload.

Nogales, the smallest and newest border post, was recently selected as the sole southern border test site for new Department of Homeland Security technology involving an electronic I-94 (Radio Frequency I-94) meant to enhance border security while continuing to facilitate travel and trade. Tijuana was the first crossing to implement a fast lane for precleared individuals and vehicles. The program, called Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection, requires cooperation between both federal governments as well as local authorities and results in border-crossing times counted in minutes rather than hours. There are already plans to implement this program at the Nuevo Laredo crossing. Together, these initiatives provide for a more secure border because of the pre-screening and technology involved.

Ambassador Tony Garza, a border native from Brownsville, Texas, is

Now the Museum Casamata, this historic fort was constructed in 1845 to protect against US troops.



acutely aware of the unique circumstances present in the region. In a speech given at the University of Denver, he noted, "Working together to make the border safe and secure and accelerating Mexico's economic development should reduce migration pressures and create a climate that allows us to generate farther-reaching approaches to the other challenges we face."

And those challenges are many. While highlighting the improving bilateral relationship over the years, Ambassador Garza has repeatedly urged the Mexican government to take the steps necessary to bring drug kingpins to justice. To help achieve that goal, the embassy and consulates cooperate closely with the Mexican law enforcement community, sharing information that has brought record numbers of American and Mexican fugitives to face justice.

The border is a region sited in the crosshairs of the political machines of both nations, a region dodging the crossfire of warring drug cartels and a region that finds itself at a critical crossroads from which no path seems clear. These posts represent the leading inland ports between two great nations, and they will continue to serve as such. With the exchange of commerce and people also comes the exchange of ideas, and with ideas comes the promise of new beginnings. ■

Mr. Kelly is a creative writer and the husband of Nuevo Laredo Consul Kim Kelly; Ms. Baptista is vice consul in Tijuana; Mr. Hinckley is a management officer in Ciudad Juarez; and Ms. Walsh is a management officer in Matamoros.

By the Numbers

Interesting Facts about the U.S.-Mexico Relationship

BACK AND FORTH

- Mexico hosts one of the largest communities of Americans living abroad, with an estimated 385,000 U.S. citizens residing permanently in the country.
- In 2004, more than 10.3 million Americans visited Mexico overnight or longer, spending \$6.65 billion. Some 6.8 million Mexicans visited the U.S. overnight or longer, spending a reported \$2.2 billion, and 120 million "day-trippers" spent more than \$4 billion in the U.S.
- In Fiscal Year 2004, U.S. consular posts in Mexico issued almost one of every five (18.4 percent) temporary visitor visas issued worldwide to meet this demand.

LAW AND ORDER

- More than 20 percent of all Americans arrested outside the U.S. every year are arrested in Tijuana, Mexico, a popular day-tourist destination.
- The U.S. Border Patrol apprehended Mexican citizens attempting to illegally enter the U.S. in more than 1.2 million instances during 2004.
- More than 70 percent of the cocaine entering the U.S. may pass through Mexico; 90 percent of the heroin sold in the U.S. west of the Mississippi River also passes through Mexico.

BUSY BORDER

- The U.S.-Mexico border is the busiest in the world, with more than 1 million legal crossings daily.
- During 2003, the most recent year for which figures are available, more than 13,200 commercial vehicles (trucks and train cars) entered the U.S. from Mexico every day.
- During the same year, for Texas alone, commercial traffic topped more than 16,100 two-way vehicle crossings per day.
- There are about 13 million inhabitants in the four U.S. and six Mexican states of the U.S.-Mexico border region (U.S.: 6.6 million; U.S.; Mexico: 6.4 million).

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Mexico is the United States' No. 2 trading partner, after Canada, with two-way trade between the U.S. and Mexico surpassing \$266.6 billion in 2004.
- More than 2,600 U.S. firms have a strong presence in Mexico. One such company, Wal-Mart, is the largest private sector employer in the country, with more than 112,000 Mexican employees on its payroll.
- Mexico and the U.S. share 65 threatened or endangered migratory species, and U.S. wildlife icons such as gray whales depend on wintering or nesting/calving sites in Mexico for their survival.
- Diseases and health issues do not respect borders: the incidence of tuberculosis in both U.S. and Mexican border communities exceed national rates by 70 and 100 percent, respectively.



Just a few short years ago, the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment was a modest-sized operation with a manageable workload. That was before the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative catapulted REE to the forefront of the recruitment and hiring competition for America's "best and brightest."

The DRI allowed the Department to hire above attrition, recover from earlier shortfalls and bring staffing back into alignment with allocated positions. REE "seized the moment" by re-engineering many of the recruitment and hiring processes, to dramatic effect. The recently released update to the "War for Talent Report" by noted consultant McKinsey & Company cited the Department's "dramatic improvements in recruiting and hiring since 1999" and noted the Department's success in increasing the number and caliber of recruits and the overall number of new employees by more than 2,000 in three years. McKinsey also noted improved marketing of the Foreign Service and the cultivation of successful applicants as key to the recruitment successes.

A T A G L A N C E

Office name: Recruitment, Examination and Employment

Symbol: HR/REE

Office Director: Marianne M. Myles

Deputy Director: Bruce L. Cole

Staff size: 125

Office location: SA-1

REE is the face of the Foreign Service to all Foreign Service and student employee hopefuls. Its mission: to recruit, evaluate and hire the best-qualified employees for the Department's Foreign Service workforce. Fueled by a DRI-driven budget infusion for advertising and technological innovation, REE saw an explosion of applications for the Foreign Service

// New Hire Central //

BY JEAN NEITZKE

TARGETS THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST



Working as REE recruiters at a 2005 career fair, Judy Carson (right) and Clyde Bishop (center) explain the challenges and benefits of working for the State Department.

Written Exam, for specialist positions and for a wide range of student employment and internship programs.


“High Tech and High Touch” summarizes the Recruitment Division’s approach to informing people of Foreign Service career opportunities and of showcasing the student programs that serve as a recruitment tool in their own right. The careers web site, www.careers.state.gov, which has received awards from marketing and web technology industry groups, contains interactive components to help prospective hires determine the best Foreign Service career track or specialty for them. Visitors to the site can go to “Assignment Abroad,” an interactive tool that allows the visitor to experience a scenario from the perspective of each of the five FS generalist career tracks. They can also find out where the nearest Diplomats-in-Residence (FSOs on college campuses nationwide) are, and, through links, apply online for many student programs, the Foreign

Service Written Exam and most of the specialist hiring categories.

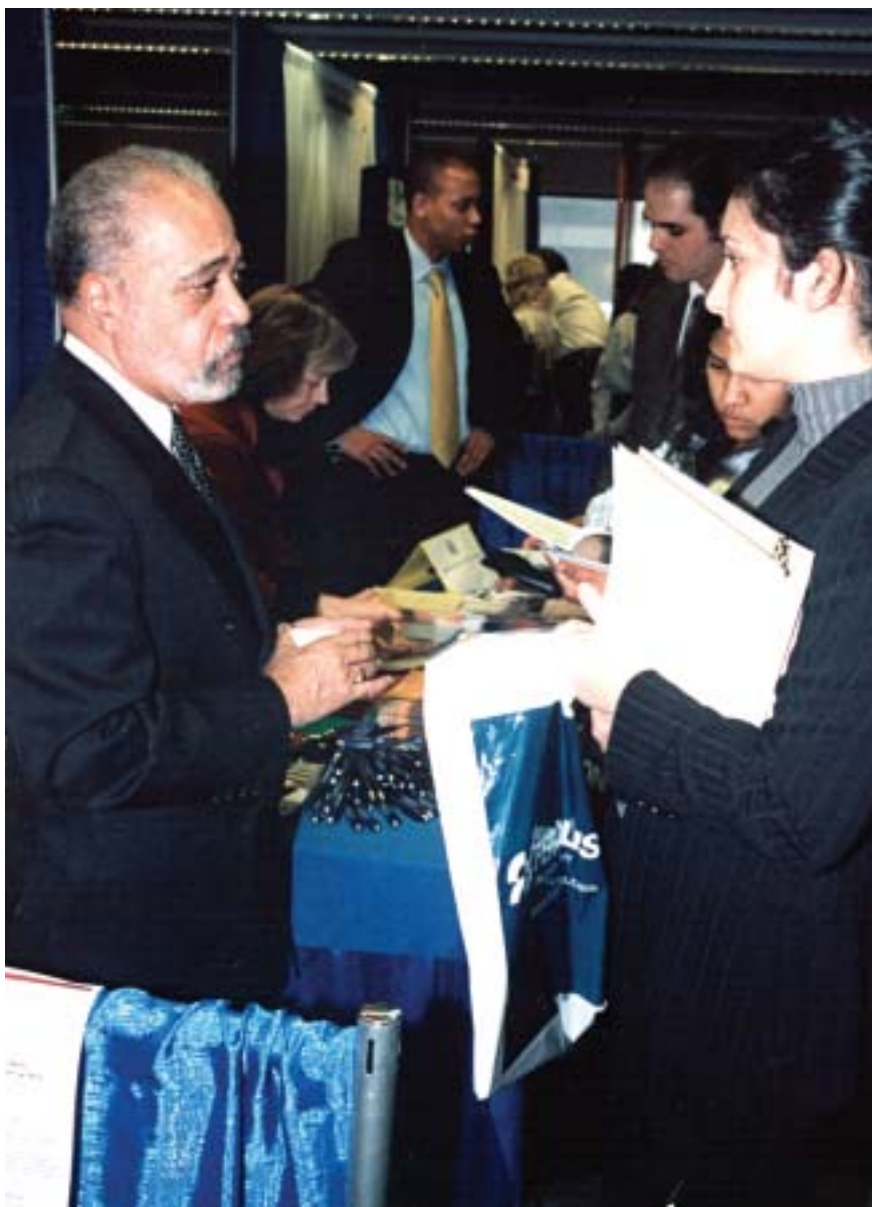
The Outreach Branch’s 10 recruiters, both FSOs and Civil Service employees, maintain busy travel schedules to universities, career fairs and professional conferences, meeting thousands of people interested in the full range of Foreign Service careers. Through creative marketing, REE has established an “employer brand” that has paid dividends in increasing State’s visibility as an employer of choice.

“We want to create an emotional connection with our targeted audience, so that they see a career with the Department as the best possible career choice for them,” says Diane Castiglione, director of recruitment.

As Secretary Rice told McKinsey, her “first priority is to improve the diversity of our workforce.” Through aggressive and creative recruitment, REE has increased the number of FSO minority hires from 13 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in



“WE WANT TO CREATE AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION WITH OUR TARGETED AUDIENCE, SO THAT THEY SEE A CAREER WITH THE DEPARTMENT AS THE BEST POSSIBLE CAREER CHOICE FOR THEM.”



During his stint as the diplomat-in-residence at New York's City College, Clyde Bishop concentrated on minority recruiting.

2005. To do this, REE has developed a recruitment message designed to appeal to diverse audiences and has targeted its efforts at minority communities to raise their awareness of the Department's career opportunities. REE has formed partnerships with many minority organizations, participated in minority-focused conferences and advertised in minority-focused media—both print and electronic.

Among REE's latest recruitment innovations is developing Spanish language materials to reach out to family members of potential recruits so they will better understand and appreciate the unique challenges and rewards of a diplomatic career.

The recruiting blitz delivers large numbers of candidates for the Foreign Service Written Exam, and, for the 19 specialist categories, a qualifications evaluation. The testing company ACT administers the FSWE, whose contract with the Department is managed by REE. FSWE-taker numbers

have skyrocketed after a decade of decreasing numbers—in 2005, almost 19,000 sat for the exam, 20 percent of whom passed and were invited to the day-long oral assessment, administered by the 27-person Board of Examiners Staff. They will conduct some 3,700 generalist and more than 4,000 specialist exams in 2005-06, many of them at testing centers across the country.

Most of the assessors are senior Foreign Service officers, who bring years of experience to the task of selecting the next generation of diplomats. As one BEXer said, "It's inspiring to see a successful candidate, and know that you are selecting the face of U.S. diplomacy for decades to come." BEX staff includes a corps of program assistants who, arriving at dawn, prepare the materials for the assessment and shepherd the candidates through the stressful assessment day, which includes a group exercise, structured interview and a timed case management study.

The sometimes challenging task of converting a euphoric exam passer into a new hire on the payroll is job 1 for REE's Employment Division. Employment takes the candidates' application and scores, obtains the medical and security clearances from MED and DS, respectively, and maintains the rank-order registers from which names are selected to form new Foreign Service orientation classes. The REE registrars, as they are known, field endless inquiries from anxious candidates and assemble classes that include just the right mix of career tracks and specialties to respond to the Department's hiring needs. The best part of the job, says registrar Carolyn Torrence, "is making the phone

calls with the job offers. It's a great feeling to give someone the news they have been waiting and hoping for."

The mix of Foreign and Civil Service personnel, augmented by contractors with expertise in marketing and WAE employees, provides a rich and varied professional environment. Overseeing this employment 'empire', Director Marianne Myles is proud of the fact that, due to increasing use of technology by both REE and Diplomatic Security, the time from examination to hire has dropped dramatically in recent years, reducing the loss of first-rate prospects to other employers with shorter hiring horizons. The challenge, according to Ms. Myles, will be to maintain the high quality of recruitment efforts in a future environment of reduced resources. REE is poised to meet that challenge. ■

The author is a WAE in the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment.



Shake on It

FAIRNESS AND TRANSPARENCY ARE GOALS IN FS ASSIGNMENTS **BY BILL PALMER**

The Foreign Service assignment process has long been a focus of both rank-and-file and management attention, since it is crucial to individual employees' careers and the effectiveness of the Department as a whole.

Making the process transparent, fair and efficient are the primary goals of the Office of Career Development and Assignments, along with providing good customer service. CDA's 100-plus employees administer a complex global personnel system that makes about 3,000 assignments each year.

Continuing improvements in the assignments system—including enhancements to FSBid, implementation of the Director General's Career Development Program and publi-

cation of CDA's Standard Operating Procedures to the OpenNet—have moved the office closer to its goals.

"We're doing a pretty good job in making the process as equitable as possible," says Director Hans Klemm. He pointed to the Department's focus on enforcing "fair share" bidding rules in recent years. (The rules are designed to get all Foreign Service officers to serve their fair share of assignments in differential or hardship posts.)

Fair share rules, though, may soon be supplanted by the Career Development Program, a new concept that was introduced last year for FS generalists. A similar program for specialists is being introduced now, Mr. Klemm says.

The program “sets out training and assignments milestones that have to be accomplished by generalists to be competitive for the Senior Foreign Service,” he says. The objective is to promote to the senior level only those officers who have demonstrated operational effectiveness over several regions and functions, leadership and management effectiveness, language proficiency and responsiveness to service needs.

That said, there is no Department policy preventing assistant secretaries, for example, from proposing non-senior

The bureaus convene meetings, popularly known as “meat markets,” to look at the list of bidders on different jobs and pick a first choice and sometimes second and third choices.

officers as their deputies. Such nominations must, however, clear a committee of senior Department leaders chaired by the deputy secretary, Mr. Klemm says.

How does the assignment process work?

On August 15, some 2,920 domestic and overseas positions due for reassignment in the summer 2006 cycle were posted on the Open Net-based FSBid, which can be used by bidders for researching, sorting and submitting bids. Meanwhile, career development officers sent bidding instructions to their clients. Employees had until mid-October to place up to 15 bids on onward assignments. They convey their priorities and concerns to their CDOs.

But the crucial step for bidders, Mr. Klemm says, is to contact the bureaus about the jobs they are interested in. He particularly stresses to entry-level employees bidding on mid-level jobs for the first time that “they need to go out and lobby.” Since their first two assignments were directed by CDA with no bureau input, they aren’t used to lobbying to get an assignment, he says.

He and senior assignments officer Jacki Ratner suggest first contacting the incumbent in the job, who will recommend others to contact—usually including the deputy chief of mission and executive officer at an overseas post or the deputy office director and bureau executive office for domestic positions. Often it is a good idea to lobby a functional bureau as well, they say—for example, Consular Affairs, if bidding on a mid-level or higher consular job.

The bureaus convene meetings, popularly known as “meat markets,” to look at the list of bidders on different jobs and pick a first choice and sometimes second and third choices. They will then negotiate with bidders and strike a bargain that results in a “handshake,” Mr. Klemm says. The hand-

shake is ratified—usually—by the assignment panel, which is chaired by the CDA director or deputy director.

Sometimes in panel deliberations, a “shoot-out” occurs between two people for the same job or between two bureaus for the same person. Rarely, there will be a “shoot-down,” during which one or more bureaus raise objections to a proposed assignment. Such controversies are decided by a vote of panel members. Panels also may discuss issues such as timing, tour length and R&Rs.

The whole process is a delicate and sometimes awkward dance for bidders, who may not want to enter bids until they see the promotion lists, says Ms. Ratner. Then they may have to decide whether to take an offer from a bureau that is not one of their top choices or wait for a better offer. And if they aren’t picked by the bureau they want, they have to decide if they want to force a shoot-out in the assignment panel and possibly face hard feelings even if they win.

There are traditionally difficult-to-fill positions in some differential posts. Because of a structural deficit in generalist officers at the O-2 and O-3 levels and a surplus—thanks to the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative—at the O-4 and O-5 levels, some posts below the section-head level are staffed mainly by entry-level employees, a situation Mr. Klemm says concerns him. He says bureaus try to mitigate problems at such posts by, for example, trying to find Deputy Chiefs of Missions with strong mentoring and interpersonal skills.

The toughest jobs of all, perhaps, are at the several posts where tours are unaccompanied. At two of those posts, Baghdad and Afghanistan, Mr. Klemm says, his office is monitoring how people assigned there are faring in their onward assignments. The Director General, he says, would like to see them get one of their top bids. What he has found is that they aren’t bidding exclusively on the Parises and Londons of the world. In fact, he says, the majority, by their choice, went on to other hardship posts.

CDA serves Foreign Service employees in many different ways. In addition to counseling employees on assignments and training opportunities, they log “handshakes” and represent the interests of their clients at panel. They direct assignments to entry-level positions.

Assignments officers represent the interests of the bureaus in the process, create agenda items for panels and handle training and transfer issues for employees changing posts. AOs also supervise the technicians who complete various essential personnel and travel actions. CDA’s Office of Career Development and Training manages long-term training programs and detail assignments outside the Department. The continuity counselor offers professional career counseling services, especially on issues relating to tenure and retention. ■

**BEHIND
THE
SCENES**

The author is a writer/editor at State Magazine.

MYTHS AND MAGIC

CIVIL SERVICE MENTORING GROWS BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS

By Sue Porter Beffel

In 2001, when I first assumed the role of civil service mentoring coordinator, I found on my shelf a seminal book by Margo Murray, *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring*. Since then, the program has grown from a pilot of 24 pairs from one bureau to nearly 200 pairs Department-wide in locations throughout the United States.

What myths and magic have we created in the last four years?

THE MYTHS

“What do you know about mentoring at State?” When we ask this question at the human resources and office management support fairs, we hear many answers:

- “There’s a group of employees who mentor elementary school kids.”
- “That’s for new hires.”
- “That’s for secretaries, right?”
- “I heard about it from my friend, who loves it, but why didn’t you publicize it?”
- “How could I not know? You sent out so many notices, I’d have had to be under a rock not to know.”

Like all myths, each mentoring myth has some truth. Let’s explore some of the myths that have grown around mentoring in the Department.

Myth: There is only one mentoring program.

Reality: Mentoring takes many forms at State:

Volunteers have been meeting with students at Miner Elementary School for eight years.

Young Professionals Society at State (www.YPRO.us) has a new peer-mentoring link.

Powell, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Council for Excellence in Government and other Fellows programs include mentoring (see individual programs), as does the Foreign Service Institute’s Office Support Professionals’ Program.

The Foreign Service Mentoring Program sets up Foreign Service mentors for new junior officers and Foreign Service specialists.

Many embassies have their own programs, as described in *State Magazine* (June 2004).

The Civil Service Mentoring Program matches Civil Service and Foreign Service mentors with protégés at all levels, from GS-1 to GS-15.



Mentors Michael Ward (left), CSP classification chief, and Paul Lawrence, CSP career development chief, share success stories with protégé Andrea Lauritzen, OES bioterrorism/ biodefense foreign affairs officer, at a summer mentoring forum.

And, of course, informal mentoring is a Department tradition. At least one informal mentoring circle has formed, and one-on-one mentoring takes place throughout the Department. The rest of this article focuses on the Civil Service Mentoring Program.

Myth: Mentoring is just for “them.”

Reality: We can all find, or become, mentors.

There is a program for everyone—male, female, minority, physically challenged, older or younger. For the Civil Service program, the only limit is that you must plan to be in the U.S. for the mentoring year, May to May.

Myth: You need to be a senior manager to mentor.

Reality: Civil Service mentors range from GS-10 to Senior Executive Service and Senior Foreign Service.

Our protégés number nearly 200 this year and range from GS-3 to GS-15. They seek mentors who can guide them to deeper knowledge of their own field or to a broader understanding of the Department. Some have just begun a new job while others have been in the same job 10 or more years. Most mentors are about two grade levels above their protégés.

Myth: All protégés are looking for a new job.

Reality: Some are, but others just want a new perspective.

Mentoring helps employees sharpen their skills, network and focus on their career goals. For some, that leads to a new

job. Most find new responsibilities and recognition and renewed commitment in their current situation. They bloom where they are planted. No one is promised a new job—all have the chance to position themselves for future opportunities.

Myth: Only Civil Service can mentor Civil Service.

Reality: Most Civil Service protégés want Civil Service role models, but others want to learn more about the Foreign Service.

Some hope to join the Foreign Service and others just want to understand their Foreign Service colleagues better. We have 48 Foreign Service mentors in 2005-2006.

Myth: Everyone should be a mentor.

Reality: Mentors need the ability to listen and connect with their protégés.

Creating a connection takes time. In the Civil Service program, mentors commit to two to four hours per month on mentoring activities, and protégés commit to developing an action plan, setting goals and following through. While mentoring is a good way to develop communication, interpersonal and goal-setting skills, not everyone's talents and personal and professional responsibilities allow them to do this.

Myth: Mentors know all the answers.

Reality: Mentors don't know it all.

Mentors in the Civil Service program have several years' experience in at least one area. Good mentors know that they still have much to learn—their lively curiosity drives them to ask coaching questions and to suggest sources of additional information for their protégés.

MENTORING MAGIC

When mentoring works well, we don't often hear about it. Sometimes an emergency highlights the value of mentoring connections. A few years ago, I got a call from the boss of Cathy Dawson, who had just lost her husband.

"Help us reach her mentor, Maggy Morse," the boss pleaded. "Cathy needs her support."

After Katrina, we were relieved to hear that Randee Robichaux, our New Orleans protégé, was alive and staying with family. She credited her mentor, Steven Sena, for putting her in touch with Department resources. His e-mail address was the only link to the Department she remembered.

This winter, protégé Brandy Hill researched mentoring as part of her master's thesis. She surveyed our women protégés on the impact of mentoring on their career development. With the help of her mentor, Pamela Mills-Edmonds, Brandy overcame her fear of public speaking to present a poised outline of her project to all the mentors and protégés in the Loy Henderson Conference Room.

What *is* magic? What is easy for one person seems like magic to another. Results, however, are real. Here are some

accomplishments reported by protégés in the 2005 Mid-Point Evaluation:

- I became employee of the month.
- I desperately needed a big picture, and I have been able to get it.
- I know where I want to be at State in five years and how to get there.
- Shadowing several managers motivated me to return to college to get my degree.
- My portfolio has been upgraded in terms of responsibilities.
- I recently did a rotation on Capitol Hill, fulfilling one of my goals from the mentoring action plan.
- I have made positive internal attitudinal changes and became more assertive and proactive in meeting others and networking.
- I have a better focus on my specific marketable skills, and additional knowledge of the Civil Service personnel system and how it works.
- I have shown my supervisor that I have the confidence and drive to advance to more responsibilities.
- As a new employee at the Department, participating in the program has helped me feel a sense of belonging.



Mentor Patricia Toner (left), FSI/SPAS/OMT, and protégé Seifa Hauptmann, PRM/AFR, listen intently at a group forum.

Applications for the Civil Service Mentoring Program 2006–2007 will open with a kickoff the morning of March 1. Watch for announcements.

Clear up any myths you may have heard, and read about more mentoring magic at our web site, http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/csp/cs_mentoring.html, or click on the mentor icon at the upper left of the State Intranet main page. ■

The author is civil service mentoring coordinator in the Career Development Office.

Tomara Moss, CDRC administrative assistant, returns a book to the CDRC library.



New Tools for New Times

RESOURCE CENTER HELPS EMPLOYEES MANAGE CAREERS **BY DARRELL BOTT**

The phone conversation ended with this comment: “I came to you for help with my resume, but I left with a new vision for what I do in my work. Thank you.”

The counselors at the Career Development Resource Center hear lots of compliments like this from employees. Their public presentations and lunchtime workshops have built a large following throughout the Department. Director General W. Robert Pearson notes that State’s CDRC provides guidance and coaching, evaluates skills and work preferences and helps employees set realistic goals.

“The center’s experienced career counselors, library and computer resources are open to all employees, contractors and Foreign Service families,” Mr. Pearson says. “I urge our employees to take advantage of these resources and services. I encourage supervisors to work with their employees to provide time for these very important career management activities.”

Society’s view of work and careers has changed dramatically in the last few years. In the relatively static “Society” society of the past, it was not uncommon for a person to expect to work with the same employer and in basically the same job for an entire career. Most people didn’t worry much about career planning, additional education or individual development.

Changes and Choices

Things have changed, says Mac Sadoris, a career counselor and executive coach with the center. Today, employee responsibilities, workplace opportunities and the work itself change

constantly. Many employees must make important career decisions every day.

“Career development is no longer just about when to change jobs, but includes critical choices about our ongoing learning and growth,” Mr. Sadoris says. “Building a record of accomplishments and leadership qualities to position ourselves for new opportunities, making smart and energized job changes to maintain our success and satisfaction and maintaining resilience and enthusiasm for our work in face of the challenges we have never seen before are all essential in today’s work world.”

Mr. Sadoris says that when working with government employees today, career counselors have at least three critical objectives.

“First, we are here to help individual employees develop the skills and know-how that are best suited to the mission they serve in the Department,” he says. “Second, we try to help them make good choices each day that help them remain energized, committed and fully engaged in meeting the challenges of their work in the context of the organization’s mission. Third, we help clients find new opportunities that are well suited to their interests, skills and commitments. Sometimes this work involves changing jobs, and we know how to help people do that better than anyone.”

In today’s work world, people who don’t take charge of planning and managing their careers will probably end up somewhere they don’t want to be. The problem is that managing a career is not easy for many people; in fact, it can be

very difficult and confusing. It involves understanding oneself and the work world, then making informed decisions to improve satisfaction and success.

Maureen Kim, a counselor in the CDRC, says people need to be aware of their unique gifts and talents, their accomplishments and how they have contributed to the organization's mission. It is important to continuously assess interests, skills, values and abilities so they can clarify life and career goals.

"For many working professionals, achieving the right work-life balance is also a critical component for planning and managing your career," she says.

Job Life Cycles

Mr. Saddoris describes what he calls the "life cycle" of a job. "It may be difficult to find and maintain the energy and enthusiasm when you are facing a very steep learning curve in a new responsibility or position," he says. "You may get a rush when you finally reach that expert level and everyone knows that you are good, but that rush can soon turn to despair if you begin losing interest and letting your performance slip. You may have reached what we call the crash, where you no longer feel a sense of purpose in your work.

"No matter where you are in the life cycle, a professional career counselor can help you rekindle and refuel that spark of energy and enthusiasm you need to find satisfaction and be successful in your work."

CDRC counselors can teach employees how to stay fully engaged through networking and alliance building. They can teach effective job-hunting strategies, communication skills and self-marketing. They can help in better integrating work and life roles. They can also help in managing stress due to job demands, job loss or career transition.

One client who sought CDRC assistance to improve his resume came away impressed with the staff's responsiveness, professionalism and insight.

"The advice and encouragement I received from the counselors helped me gain greater understanding of working in government," he said. "[CDRC] helped me recover from a stressful work situation and restore my self-confidence."

Ask Serious Questions

People often ask CDRC counselors about changing jobs. The center suggests that employees considering this action first seriously weigh several factors. How have your interests matured and changed and what do they suggest about the work you want to do next? Is there still opportunity for you to grow and take on new roles and assignments where you are now? How would you like to contribute to the mission of the Department next; what mission do you want to become a part of? Do you need to move to pursue work or life goals that you are enthusiastic about?

Employees should probe their career from time to time with a series of questions: Am I crashing and experiencing job burnout? Has my job become too stressful for me? Am I bored with my work? Do I need to earn more money?

The CDRC's experienced career counselors provide professional one-on-one assistance to envision and explore,



Top: Mac Saddoris encourages mentors and protégés to explore their strengths through appreciative inquiry conversations. Bottom: Maureen Kim, Senior Career Counselor, meets with a client in her office.

plan, manage and make decisions about transitions. They also conduct workshops where they teach employees how to energize their work life and the basic skills they need to manage their careers and lives.

After one such workshop, Richard Brown of the Office of the Inspector General said participants appreciated knowing that they weren't alone in their efforts to work with their career. "The counselor inspired the group, gave us excellent information and answered participants' questions," Mr. Brown said.

The CDRC can also help managers keep their employees engaged. The counselors have coached leaders, managers and supervisors throughout the Department on the nature of shared leadership and how to get things done working with and through others.

The center, located in SA-1, Room L321, Columbia Plaza, is open from 8:30 to 5:00, Monday through Friday. The telephone number is (202) 663-3042, and the e-mail address is CDRC@state.gov. ■

The author is an employee development specialist in the Office of Civil Service Personnel Management.



Awards Day Honors Department's Diversity of Talent

★ ★ ★ BY ROB WILEY ★ ★ ★



The Secretary sits with the 2005 class of Benjamin Franklin's best and brightest diplomatic descendants.

The elegant Benjamin Franklin Room, the largest and perhaps most ornate of the Department's diplomatic reception rooms, filled quickly during the early November Department Awards Ceremony. Named for the Father of the American Foreign Service, the room on this occasion held Mr. Franklin's best and brightest diplomatic descendants.

Some traveled great distances; some came from offices within the Harry S Truman Building. They came to receive awards for accomplishments in a wide variety of endeavors, from management excellence to trade development, from environmental diplomacy to public diplomacy. One—Shaun Donnelly—came straight from the airport, baggage and all, to join wife Susan in accepting his Cordell Hull Award for Economic Achievement by Senior Officers.

"Now that Shaun is here," quipped host W. Robert Pearson, director general of the Foreign Service and director of Human Resources.

All came to receive recognition from the Department for what Ambassador Pearson called their outstanding contributions to American diplomacy.

"Today's award recipients represent the strongest traditions of the Department of State," said Ambassador Pearson. "We are proud to extend to them this justly earned recognition."

The director general credited the generosity of the many private donors, whose contributions made possible many of the prestigious awards. He especially noted late ambassadors Luther I. Replogle and Herbert Salzman; ambassadors Charles E. Cobb Jr., C. Howard Wilkins Jr., Rockwell Anthony Schnabel and Swanee Hunt; former Under Secretary for Global Affairs Frank E. Loy; and the Vincent Astor Foundation.

He also recognized the wife of the late Robert C. Frasure, for whom one of the Department's most coveted awards is named.

"It is an honor to present the award in his name that represents the highest ideals of service for which he stood," the director general said.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice thanked the award winners for their continued commitment to government service. She praised their selfless devotion to the "noble calling" of diplomacy.

"There is no higher calling than to help other people fulfill their aspirations for a better life, a more democratic future and a more peaceful world," the Secretary said. "You are an inspiration to all of us as an example of what is best in our Department. You remind us on every day that people matter, that America matters."



Secretary Rice expresses the Department's pride to the "special" men and women honored on Awards Day.

Secretary Rice noted that the Department was engaged around the world in crucial missions such as working to save thousands of lives across sub-Saharan Africa through President Bush's emergency plan for AIDS relief; helping the people of Iraq and Afghanistan rebuild their nations; working to relieve the suffering of the victims of the 2004 tsunami in southeast Asia and October's earthquake in Pakistan; and helping advance the ideals and strengthen the institutions of democracy on every continent.

"This spirit of idealism is personified in the special men and women we're honoring today," she said. "Among these individuals, one tackles the most difficult challenges of peacemaking at the highest levels, while another reached out to mentor the youngest members of our Department. One helped to transform our partnership with a great power, while yet another worked to combat the modern form of slavery, the trafficking of persons.

"I know that I speak for everyone here today when I say that America is proud of the men and women advancing our diplomacy and changing our world for the better."

Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore also lauded the honorees' commitment to public service, espe-

cially noting the broad mix of skills and talent represented by the winners.

"Whether Foreign Service, Civil Service or Foreign Service National, you are our greatest diplomatic assets," she said. "All of you have made significant contributions to this great Department and to the advancement of our national interests."

Honoring achievement among the Department family is important because such individual honors also recognize the core values of the whole, the Under Secretary said. Collective success is based on clearly understood beliefs and values.

"In honoring this remarkable group of individuals today, we are saying that we value leadership and creativity, effectiveness and efficiency, tireless effort and a sense of mission that's both unabashedly idealistic and unfailingly pragmatic," Under Secretary Fore said.

The Under Secretary then directly addressed the seated honorees:

"On behalf of our colleagues here at Foggy Bottom and in posts abroad and also on behalf of the American people, I thank you for a job extraordinarily well done."

The author is editor of State Magazine.



**Chief Financial Officer's
Award for Distinction in
Public Finance**

Roger William Anderson

In recognition of his exemplary leadership and management acumen and his steadfast dedication to seeing through a globally complex and challenging reorganization. Through it all, he ensured that sound financial

processes were established and integrity of operations was maintained. The Bureau of Resource Management emerged with more efficient, effective operations and workforces staffed, trained and ready to support the Department's strategic objectives.



Stephen Wilkins (FSN)

For his sustained achievement in providing financial management support and expertise to numerous posts and the Department. He was a leader in the effort to ensure that the CAJE position classification system accurately captured the essential elements of cashier positions worldwide. In addition, his special effectiveness in bridg-

ing differences between Americans and locally employed staffs make him an invaluable asset to the Department.



**Director General's Award
for Excellence in Human
Resource Management**

Shelia K. Moyer

For her leadership in the face of obstacles, innovative implementation of ISO 9001 quality management systems and energetic commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity, which significantly

contributed to the fulfillment of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo's human resources objectives.



FSN of the Year (AF)

Elizabeth Muli-Kibue

In recognition of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi's sincere appreciation for her high professional standards as well as her superior work ethic. Ms. Muli-Kibue's outstanding contributions have been instrumental in the achievement of major mission goals, including the President's

Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the improvement of Mission security and the ongoing care and support of families affected by the 1998 terror attacks.



FSN of the Year (EAP)

Kulvadi Akarapanyathorn

In recognition of her exceptional and courageous efforts to protect and assist American citizens who were affected by the devastating tsunami of December 26, 2004. Ms. Akarapanyathorn, the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok's senior ACS FSN, traveled immediately to the disaster area to offer first-

response assistance to stranded Americans and to establish a visible American Embassy presence. Undaunted by the chaos, dangers and long hours, Ms. Akarapanyathorn helped hundreds of Americans who had lost everything and were consumed with worry about missing relatives and friends.



FSN of the Year (EUR)

Elyor Saidhodjaev

In recognition of his outstanding work in developing a guard force that exemplifies professionalism and courage and with appreciation for his calm and flawless performance following the July 30 bombing in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. His leadership has affected the manner in which the

guard force supports the embassy.



FSN of the Year (SA)
FSN Team, U.S. Embassy
in Colombo

In recognition of the FSN team in Colombo, which performed tirelessly in the wake of the December 26, 2004, tsunami that hit Sri Lanka and Maldives. The team handled an overwhelming consular workload, launched a massive humanitarian relief effort

and organized programs for a series of high-level U.S. government visitors.



FSN of the Year (WHA)
Edwin Perez

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to the security of American citizens in Guatemala and to professional law enforcement. Mr. Perez sets the highest standards for professional police work, respect for human rights and the primacy of the rule of law.

He instructs and inspires his colleagues and serves as a role model for his peers.



Award for Excellence in
Labor Diplomacy
Troy Damian Fitrell

In recognition of his great energy and effectiveness in advancing U.S. labor policy.



James A. Baker-C. Howard
Wilkins, Jr. Award for
Outstanding Deputy Chief
of Mission

Robert Orris Blake Jr.

In recognition of his superb leadership as Deputy Chief of Mission in New Delhi from 2004 to 2005 and with appreciation for his contributions to U.S. diplomacy, including his work to combat traf-

ficking in persons, promote U.S. exports and implement effective emergency planning.



Warren Christopher Award
for Outstanding Achievement
in Global Affairs

Lee R. Schwartz

In recognition of his exceptional leadership and creativity and with appreciation for his contributions to the development and implementation of U.S. foreign policy on the full scope of global issues, including refugee returns in

Afghanistan, human rights in Sudan, tsunami humanitarian assistance and protection of at-risk populations.



Charles E. Cobb, Jr. Award
for Initiative and Success
in Trade Development

Aurelia E. Brazeal

For her enthusiastic support of trade development and advocacy for U.S. business in Ethiopia. This award recognizes her extraordinary performance in helping to secure a \$1.3 billion contract for Boeing in the African market, pre-

serving and creating jobs for Americans and helping to increase U.S. exports to Ethiopia sevenfold.



Pushpinder Singh Dhillon

In recognition of his creative leadership in addressing structural constraints to U.S. participation in India's civil aviation, energy, telecommunications and infrastructure sectors. He provided policy direction to U.S. technology manufacturers, investors, equipment and service exporters, airlines and analysts seeking to

open the market in India.



Director General's Award
for Impact and Originality
in Reporting

Barton J. Putney

In recognition of his reporting that challenged conventional wisdom and helped shape U.S. policy on key nuclear nonproliferation issues.



**Diplomatic Security
Employee of the Year**

James C. Onusko

In recognition of his dedication, energy and management skills and with appreciation for his work to improve the operations of the State Department's security clearance program.



**James Clement Dunn Award
for Excellence**

Robert Stephen Ford

In recognition of his outstanding work implementing a key foreign policy objective: helping to form a peaceful, stable, unified and democratic Iraq. His contributions and his leadership were vital to the success of free elections in Iraq. His extraordinary perform-

ance exemplified the highest standards of U.S. diplomacy, combining leadership, courage, intellect and devotion in the promotion of U.S. national interests.



**Equal Employment
Opportunity Award**

Ruth A. Davis

In recognition of her unwavering commitment to the advancement of the Department's equal employment opportunity objectives. Her outstanding work with two Secretaries of State to promote the careers of minorities and women has set a new stan-

dard for EEO initiatives within the Department.



Thomas A. Alphin Jr.

In recognition of his many contributions to the Department of State's equal employment opportunity programs. His countless hours advising State Department managers and his active participation in the alternative dispute resolution program have been instrumental in resolving problems and avoiding time-

consuming litigation.



**Robert C. Frasure
Memorial Award**

William J. Burns

In recognition of his superb leadership of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2001 through 2004 and his many contributions to American diplomacy in that region. His unrivaled knowledge of the issues and his profound understanding of the peoples and

cultures of the region have been matched by a tireless commitment to the pursuit of peace and the alleviation of the suffering wrought by war and oppression. Through dedication, resolve and personal example, he has played a decisive role in historic U.S. efforts to restore productive political engagement in the Arab-Israeli relationship; assist Iraq in moving forward on the path to democracy; foster regional democratic, social and economic reform; and gain regional support, including an unprecedented commitment from Libya, in the prosecution of the global war against terrorism.



**Cordell Hull Award for
Economic Achievement
by Senior Officers**

Shaun Edward Donnelly

In recognition of his many contributions to global trade and finance. His leadership, energy and initiative in support of trade negotiations and economic reforms have helped to promote U.S. interests and ideals around the world.



**Leamon R. Hunt Award for
Management Excellence**

Jennifer Allyn McIntyre

In recognition of her skill, judgment and dedication to her work at the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh. She personifies management excellence, as shown in her work to improve services, conditions and morale that will benefit the mission for years to come. She inspired her management team to

consolidate and reduce costs for shared services while updating standards and instituting performance measures. Conditions for locally employed staff were significantly improved when she established a fully funded retirement plan for them. Her proactive work for the embassy's move to a new embassy compound provided a forum for agencies to resolve problems well in advance of the move.



Swanee Hunt Award for Advancing Women's Role in Policy Formulation

Amy O'Neill Richard

Her tireless advocacy, adroit public diplomacy and comprehensive analytical contributions have resulted in major changes in U.S. law against trafficking in persons, convinced the private sector to assist, facilitated the efforts of numerous nongovernmental organizations and led governments around the globe to take vigorous action against this pernicious trade.



Innovation in the Use of Technology Award

David Bryan Dlouhy

In recognition of his many contributions to State Department initiatives enhancing our information technology systems to facilitate internal and external processes pertaining to employee benefits, entitlements and other applications.



Linguist of the Year Award

Timothy M. Scherer

In recognition of his exemplary achievements and extraordinary command of Thai and with appreciation for his outstanding contributions to furthering critical U.S. policy and humanitarian goals in Thailand.



Frank E. Loy Award for Environmental Diplomacy

Susan Biniaz

In recognition of her exceptional service, as evidenced by her formidable negotiating skills, extraordinary intellect, sound judgment, thoughtful policy advice and unmatched expertise on the full range of U.S. environmental, science, technology and health interests over the past two decades.



Thomas Morrison Information Management Award

Jeffrey J. Schroeder

In recognition of his work setting up information technology infrastructure to support the State Department's mission in Baghdad, Iraq, and with appreciation for his unwavering dedication to duty in a dangerous environment.



Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy

Richard J. Schmierer

In recognition of his outstanding leadership, initiative and integrity as a public diplomacy officer and with appreciation for his extraordinary creativity and sound judgment under unusually challenging and difficult conditions in Saudi Arabia, Germany and, most recently, Iraq.



Arnold L. Raphel Memorial Award

Jimmy J. Kolker

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to strengthening the Foreign Service through developing the potential of junior officers, reflecting the spirit of Arnold L. Raphel in his work.



Herbert Salzman Award for Excellence in International Economic Performance

Kurt W. Tong

In recognition of his contributions to U.S. trade policy and U.S.-Korea economic relations and with appreciation for his insightful reporting and impressive management and leadership.



**Luther I. Repogle Award for
Management Improvement**
Jo Ellen Powell

Frederick Bishop Cook

In recognition of their work to develop a regional platform for the State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. Their outstanding collaboration transformed the Florida Regional Center by assembling a cadre of professionals to provide offshore management services directly to 15 posts in the bureau. Their innovative approach will benefit other bureaus and the State Department as a whole.



**Rockwell Anthony Schnabel
Award for Advancing U.S.-
EU Relations**

Kelly E. Adams-Smith

In recognition of her initiative, creativity and commitment to advancing U.S. interests and enhancing U.S.-European Union relations. As a driving force behind efforts to develop the Department's institutional

strength, she helped develop a special European Union training course for the Department of State's Foreign Service National employees. She also led the move to make the American Chamber of Commerce in Estonia and the companies it represents become more successful advocates for U.S.-friendly decisions within the EU. In addition, her significant outreach work with the Estonian government resulted in crucial support for the U.S. biotech position.



**Civil Service Secretary
of the Year Award**
Deborah B. Callahan

In recognition of her work in support of labor-management relations, legislative affairs, inter-agency cooperation and public affairs in the Bureau of Human Resources at the Department of State. She helped explain significant new initiatives to State

Department employees at home and abroad. Her dedication and her positive attitude are worthy of emulation and reflect the finest traditions of public service.



**Office Management
Specialist of the Year Award**
Karie L. Ennis

In recognition of her outstanding contributions to the professional development, morale and operational effectiveness of the U.S. Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City and with appreciation for her dedication to achieving U.S. policy objectives in Vietnam.



**Barbara M. Watson Award
for Consular Excellence**
John Brien Brennan

In recognition of his dedication to consular diplomacy and his strong leadership both as acting consul general and as deputy consul general at the U.S. Embassy in London.



FSNs of the year honored for wide-ranging service and achievement pose with DG W. Robert Pearson.

2005 FSNs of the Year Dealt with Tsunami, Security

★ ★ ★ BY BILL PALMER ★ ★ ★

Every year, each of the six regional bureaus names a Foreign Service National of the Year. The devastating tsunami that hit Southeast Asia a year ago led to awards for FSNs in two of the countries most affected. Three of the other winners had diverse achievements, but—in this post-9/11 era—all were honored in part for their role in protecting mission employees and other Americans in their respective countries. The sixth, who was also named Department-wide FSN of the Year, works in Baghdad and, for security reasons, must remain anonymous.

AF—Elizabeth Muli-Kibue

Elizabeth Muli-Kibue, a contract specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, was chosen as the FSN of the Year by the Bureau of African Affairs for being “instrumental in the achievement of major mission goals, including the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the improvement of Mission security and the ongoing care and support of families impacted by the 1998 terror attacks.”

Ms. Muli-Kibue, who has worked at the embassy since 1995, lost many friends in the 1998 attack, which injured her and killed 34 embassy FSNs. So she is passionate about assisting the victims’ families. She manages contracts that

and manage the many contractors that work at this huge embassy, which has more than 200 Americans and about 650 FSNs, she says.

She is also a crucial part of the mission’s effort to fight AIDS in Kenya, setting up streamlined—but proper—procedures for administering the complex program, which is run under the auspices of the Centers for Disease Control. She manages contracts for a range of services, from providing test kits to setting up test centers and persuading people to get tested.

Ms. Muli-Kibue, a widow, has another demanding job besides her work at the embassy—raising four teenage girls.



Elizabeth Muli-Kibue, 10-year veteran at US Embassy Nairobi, mother of 4 teenage girls and survivor of the 1998 attacks, plays an integral role in many Embassy programs.

provide school fees and books for the children of those killed. The program is very successful and the families are grateful. “It is a way of easing their pain,” she says.

Since the bombing, she has played a key role in mission security by helping to administer the local guard program

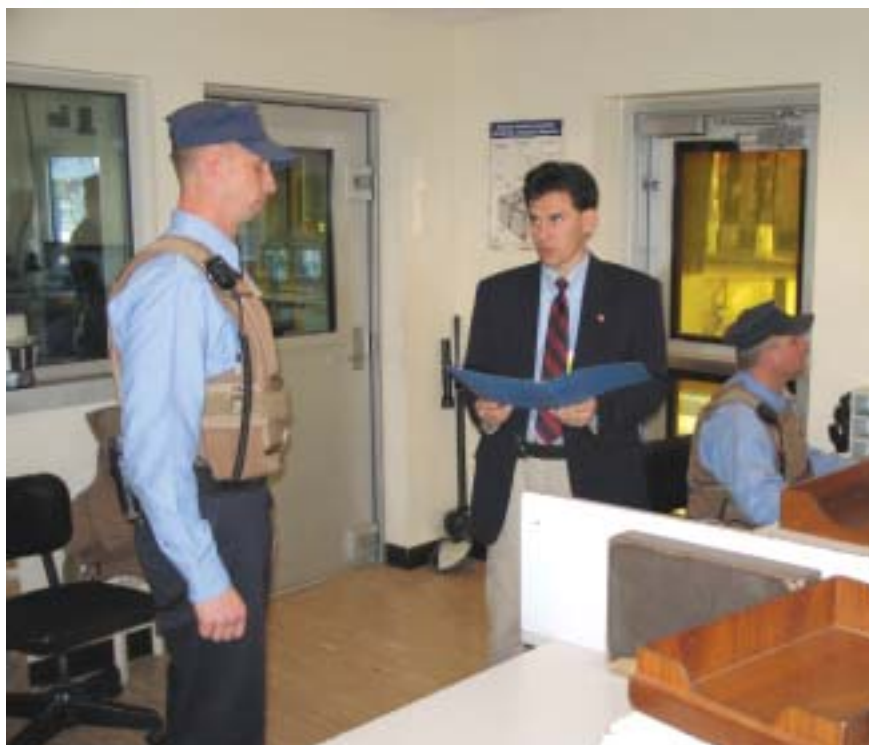
and make sure everyone was in the safe haven and that medical assistance had been summoned. He coordinated with local authorities on setting up a security perimeter, took photos and escorted the ambassador to meetings with the Uzbekistan prime minister and others. He finally got home around midnight.

EUR—Elyor Saidhodjaev

Elyor Saidhodjaev, a guard supervisor at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, was chosen as the FSN of the Year by the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. He was cited for “developing a guard force that exemplifies professionalism and courage” and for “his flawless and calm performance following the July 30, 2004, bombing.”

On that July afternoon, a visitor with a bag showed up at the embassy and tried to talk his way into the compound, but the guards—trained by Mr. Saidhodjaev—didn’t let him in. He blew himself up outside the wall by the main gate, felling two policeman and leaving nearby embassy guards in a state of shock. Mr. Saidhodjaev ran from his office and took command of the situation. (The regional security officer was out and the embassy had no Marine security guards.)

He locked down the embassy and made sure everyone was in the safe haven and that medical assistance had been summoned. He coordinated with local authorities on setting up a security perimeter, took photos and escorted the ambassador to meetings with the Uzbekistan prime minister and others. He finally got home around midnight.



Guard supervisor Elyor Saidhodjaev, recognized for training an exemplary guard force and expertly handling a July 2004 bombing just outside the Embassy Tashkent compound, was named EUR's FSN of the year.

He is quick to share the credit: "Security is teamwork. The guards did a good job—the day of the bombing and every day."

Mr. Saidhodjaev, who has worked for the embassy since 1993, is married and has three children, including an infant son who was born in August. His two brothers also work for the embassy.

SA—Colombo FSN team

The entire FSN team—about 200 employees—at the U.S. Embassy in Colombo was chosen by the Bureau of South Asian Affairs as FSNs of the Year. According to the citation, the group "performed tirelessly and selflessly in the wake of the December 26, 2004, tsunami that hit Sri Lanka and the Maldives. These FSNs handled an overwhelming consular workload, launched a massive humanitarian relief and reconstruction effort and put together seamless visits for a series of high-level U.S. government visitors."

There were close to 1,000 American tourists in the country during that Christmas season, most at beach resorts some distance from Colombo. FSNs, who had been

Senior investigator and former policeman Edwin Perez was named WHA's FSN of the year for his contributions to ensure the safety of Americans in Guatemala, instruct police officers, catch US fugitives and support police investigations.

enjoying the holidays with their families, were soon working around the clock. Some of them, with limited food and rest, negotiated washed-out roads to get to the resorts and help the survivors. Colombo was the first post in the region to account for all missing Americans, says Anusha J.A. Fernandez, who received the award on behalf of her fellow FSNs.

Among the services the FSNs provided were making hundreds of phone calls to family and friends of survivors, providing medical assistance and transportation to the hospital, providing meals and clothing and coordinating with the government and other diplomatic missions. On top of everything else, they helped organize visits by then-Secretary Colin Powell and former presidents Bush and Clinton.

Altogether, it was a monthlong effort and the staff got many letters of appreciation from grateful Americans for their kindness and help.

WHA—Edwin Perez

Edwin Perez, a senior investigator at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, is the FSN of the Year in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. His citation mentions his outstanding contributions to the security of American citizens in Guatemala and to professional law enforcement and the rule of law. "He instructs and inspires Guatemalan police officers," it says, "and provides a role model that offers hope for Guatemala's future."

Guatemala leads the world in fugitive recoveries, and Mr. Perez, a former policeman, has used his extensive police and





Kulvadi Akarapanyathorn, who has worked at US Embassy Bangkok for 11 years and traveled immediately to tsunami disaster areas, was recognized for her exceptional assistance to Americans abroad.

other contacts to help catch a number of U.S. fugitives, some of whom were hiding deep in the jungle.

He also supports police investigations—and sometimes gives them an extra push—into crimes against American citizens. When a Peace Corps volunteer was raped, he helped catch and convict the rapist, who was sentenced to 23 years in prison.

He praises the support he has gotten from Foreign Service Nationals, the regional security officers, the Guatemalan National Police and local guards. “I couldn’t do my job without it,” he says.

In addition to his police work, he conducts background investigations on embassy employees and applicants and provides protection for U.S. government visitors and others, including the U.S. national soccer team.

Mr. Perez, who has worked for the embassy 11 years, is married and has three children.

EAP—Kulvadi Akarapanyathorn

Kulvadi Akarapanyathorn, a supervisory American citizen services assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, is the FSN of the Year in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. She was cited for “her exceptional and courageous efforts to protect and assist American citizens who were affected by the devastating tsunami of December 26, 2004.”

Ms. Akarapanyathorn traveled immediately to the disaster area to offer first-response assistance to stranded Americans and to establish a visible embassy presence. Even before reaching Phi Phi Island, she could smell the dead bodies. Then she saw the collapsed hotels, bungalows and shops. “It was much worse than I thought,” she says. “I was very sad.”

Undaunted by the chaos, confusion and tension-filled 17-hour workdays, she helped hundreds of Americans who had lost everything and were consumed with worry about missing relatives and friends. Many of the victims were traumatized or injured. Hotels and transport were hard to find and communication difficult. “At city hall, we could not hear each other talking even a meter away,” she says. Cell phone networks were busy and required constant dialing.

She was honored to be included in briefings for then-Secretary Colin Powell and Florida Governor Jeb Bush. “I was very excited, even though we had no time to prepare,” she says. “I was glad that it went well.”

Ms. Akarapanyathorn has worked at the embassy 11 years. She is married and has two sons, including a newborn. ■

The author is a writer/editor for State Magazine.



Ambassador Koroologos is flanked by Mayor Guido from Dearborn, Mich., left, and Mayor Gabriels of Genk, Belgium, at the conference.

DIALOGUES, NOT MONOLOGUES

BELGIUM EMBASSY SPONSORS FIRST EXCHANGE BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BELGIAN MUSLIMS **BY AMBASSADOR TOM C. KOROLOGOS**

When I was a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors discussing U.S. radio and TV broadcasts throughout the Middle East, I saw big maps showing the reach, or “footprints,” of our transmitters and satellite broadcasts and telling us how many millions of Muslims we were reaching via Radio Sawa and Al Hurra TV.

Then when I came to Belgium and discovered that 4 or 5 percent of the population—more than 400,000 people—is Muslim, it occurred to me we were virtually ignoring the 25 million Muslims throughout Western Europe. From that grew the seed of an idea to build on the President’s Europe-wide initiative to reach out to Muslim communities.

Through our research we found that despite many differences, such as socioeconomic status and migration histories, Belgian and American Muslims share common experiences as minorities in Western secular societies.

Thus, the U.S. Embassy in Belgium, together with non-governmental organizations and private sponsors from the

United States and Belgium, brought together an impressive group of 32 American Muslims to meet with an equally impressive group of 65 Belgian Muslims to discuss everyday practical matters regarding Muslim participation in society. This two-day conference, titled “Muslim Communities Participating in Society: A Belgian-U.S. Dialogue,” took place in Brussels in November.

This was a first-ever, people-to-people exchange between American and Belgian Muslims, focusing on Muslim identity, civic life, economic opportunity, media portrayal, youth development and women’s issues. The Belgian Royal Institute for International Relations co-sponsored the conference with support from the United States Institute of Peace, DaimlerChrysler Fund and other American and European NGOs. Bruce Sherman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors in Washington and Donna Woolf, the U.S. Embassy in Brussels deputy public affairs officer and cultural affairs officer, were the chief coordinators.



Bruce Sherman speaks at a conference highlighting the experiences shared between American and Belgian Muslims. The two-day conference held in Brussels addressed common concerns and was intended as a starting point for future international exchanges.

Tapping into these experiences, our conference was not another academic exercise. It was not experts talking about Muslims. This was Muslims talking with Muslims. We created conditions for genuine dialogue to explore issues of mutual interest, share good practices and strategies for participation in society and identify ideas for future cooperation. We brought participants together and then got out of their way. The discussion topics were not issues of foreign policy, but everyday concerns.

We discovered that this is how we can really make a difference—not merely by stimulating dialogue for a few days, but rather by laying the foundation for a new form of assertive, constructive action across the two Muslim

THIS WAS A FIRST-EVER, PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGE BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BELGIAN MUSLIMS, FOCUSING ON MUSLIM IDENTITY, CIVIC LIFE, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, MEDIA PORTRAYAL, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S ISSUES.

communities and two societies. This fits with the renewed emphasis, promoted by Secretary Rice and Under Secretary Hughes, on dialogue and not monologue.

There are many stories to tell, but I would like briefly to mention Azhar Usman. He's an amazing stand-up comedian from Chicago who was present as a participant and also performed after dinner on the first night.

"I love coming to Europe to perform because I'm from America and I'm used to people who don't like me just for being a Muslim," he said. "So it's nice to finally be hated just for being an American."

Usman hit on something important with that comment, in that we are all identified by stereotypes. Just as members

of the Muslim community are stereotyped, so are Americans. And rarely are these stereotypes positive. These are the kinds of stereotypes that we must beat, and this conference has created such an opportunity.

Was this ambitious and risky? Yes it was, and I am happy to report it was a success.

There are many lessons learned from this project that could serve as a model for other posts in Europe dealing with similar issues. At the same time, each country is different and no "one-size-fits-all" approach is possible. Through serious research, outreach and networking, the U.S. Embassy in Brussels was able to get a good sense of what the key issues were for the Belgian Muslim population.

There were a number of immedi-

ate results that came out of this conference.

The mayor of Dearborn, Michigan, Michael Guido, and the mayor of Genk, Belgium, Jef Gabriels, attended and spoke of how large Muslim and ethnic communities in their respective cities succeeded in participating in society. They agreed to begin a sister city relationship.

The Islamic Society of North America, the largest Muslim organization in the United States, announced a number of exchange programs with Belgian Muslims.

In addition, KARAMAH, a U.S.-based Muslim women's legal group, invited Belgian Muslim women to the United States for training seminars.

Muslims in the American Public Square, a cooperative research study group, and Intermedia, another research

group, will join a Belgian partner to produce a study that will provide a template to better understand Muslim communities in the West.

We anticipate many more follow-on initiatives to grow out of this conference. Evaluation forms filled out by all the participants were very positive. There are always things that can be done better, but as I said in my closing remarks at the conference, this is only a beginning. I was as pleasantly surprised as everyone else when 100 Muslims responded with a standing ovation. ■

The author is U.S. Ambassador to Belgium.

One panel discussion focused on the Department's "Graphics Standards and Printing Success."



Branded

What does design have to do with diplomacy? According to the premise that launched the Department's first symposium dedicated to graphics standards and the image of diplomacy, the two go hand in hand.

To prove that point, the Bureau of Administration's Office of Multi-Media Publishing Services sponsored the Design for Diplomacy Symposium in late October. The symposium brought together 150 visual media experts from the Department and other organizations, such as The World Bank, the U.S.

SYMPOSIUM
EXPLORES LINKS
BETWEEN DESIGN
AND DIPLOMACY
BY REGINA CROSS

Agency for International Development and the United States Government Printing Services. Representatives from more than 20 Department bureaus and offices gathered in the Dean Acheson Auditorium for the symposium.

"Graphic designers and content creators have a thirst for this sort of event," said Lee Lohman, deputy assistant secretary of Records and Publishing Services. "We're all trying to use 21st century methods to convey our messages, and we are struggling. D4D was conceived because the MMS staff



IIP visual information specialist Diane Koczur questions a panel member during the recent Design for Diplomacy symposium.

wanted to bring those communities together to discuss the way forward.”

Key objectives of the symposium were to network and exchange ideas, share best practices, tackle common challenges and encourage Department personnel to get involved in developing graphic standards. The symposium also emphasized the idea that consistent graphic design standards are critical to disseminating the Department’s message to the public and essential to “branding” U.S. diplomacy efforts at home and abroad.

Keynote speaker Joanne Giordano, senior adviser to the administrator at USAID, opened the symposium with a talk titled “Building a Global Brand: A USAID Case Study.” She discussed the pre-tsunami era for USAID, when that agency annually invested billions of dollars in foreign assistance with no consistent brand or mark on the products and materials it funded.

“The first step is to create a consistent visual identity,” Ms. Giordano said. “A brand gives instant recognition and a favorable response.”

For the past year, she has spearheaded a campaign to “brand” U.S. foreign assistance, updating the USAID logo and adding a brand mark that clearly communicates U.S. aid is “from the American people.” She produced the Agency’s

first Graphic Standards Manual and is conducting workshops for employees and implementing partners to roll out the global branding.

Colleen Hope, director of electronic information in the Public Affairs office, and Martha Chaconas, EM office director for International Information Programs, led a forum on the “State Department’s Public Internet Branding Guidelines.” Ms. Hope is working with offices throughout the Department to achieve a basic branding of the Department for domestic bureau web sites.

“Branding is a key element because it provides consistent identification,” she said.

Chaconas manages the Department’s content management system project, which uses the latest technology to provide a web publishing solution to IIP and embassies. She said good branding, good navigation and a good design allow users to find what they need.

Branding surfaced frequently in a panel discussion on troubleshooting printing problems. Panel member Mark Lundi, printing and publications officer in the Multi-Media Publishing Services office, noted that the Department faces the same branding problems encountered by Ms. Giordano.

“It should all look like the Department of State,” he said. “The standards should encompass both internal and external printing.”

Other panel members included Multi-Media Publishing Services Office Director Gregory Liverpool; MMS web developer Molly Moran; MMS Chief of Graphics Regina Cross; and Les Greenberg, deputy director of the Government Printing Office.

Speaking on another panel, Roberta Mather, visual information specialist in MMS, noted that designers could maintain creativity while supporting a strong branding campaign.

“Embrace the brand identity, understand the vision, become the storyteller and see the big picture,” she said. “That makes the message identifiable.”

At least one participant left satisfied and wanting more. Diane Koczur, visual information specialist in the EM office of IIP, liked the energy and flow of ideas created during the symposium.

“We are at a critical time where image and perception are everything to the international community,” Ms. Koczur said. “It is not enough for the Department to develop and improve outreach efforts. We need to put our visual stamp on them and let the world see what we are doing.”

Mr. Lohman closed the symposium with a plea for feedback on the Graphic Standards.

“We encourage everyone to become a part of the process,” he said. “If you have issues, get together with your colleagues in MMS.”

More information on revitalizing graphic design standards and the symposium is available on the D4D web site: <http://mmswebsite.a.state.gov/d4d/index.htm>. ■

The author is chief of graphics for Multi-Media Publishing Services.

What can the Department do to appropriately express its appreciation and that of the U.S. Government to its retiring Foreign Service, Civil Service and Locally Employed Staff employees after a lifetime of dedication and sometimes very difficult service?

As part of the modernization of the retirement system that has introduced the RNet web site, AskRNet knowledge base, Annuitant Employee Express online pay system, online Personal Benefits Statement, EP+ for Retiring Employees and EP+ Professional Profile for Retired Employees, the Office of Retirement, at the request of the Director General, took a close look at how we are saying “thank you.”

On January 15, after nearly a year of deep thinking, artistic work and budget struggles, the Department will introduce a new recognition package for retiring employees and standards for retirement presentations.

Each day, new employees join the Department and seasoned veterans retire. It is this constant flow of talent that is the substance and history of our institution. We are, in the aggregate, no more than the contributions each employee makes on a daily basis. In thinking about how to say thanks, it really starts with a personal message from colleagues. All of us, across generations of Department employees, need to gather together in an appropriate act of recognition, to pay tribute to our retiring colleagues.

Former Under Secretary Marc Grossman recently wrote an eloquent plea on the need for more tradition in our system. Though stereotyped as hidebound, today’s Department employees are actually an impatient lot, modern in outlook and very wise to the ways of the world. So how do we say thank you in a way that brings the past forward, ties us to our roots and looks to the opportunities that present themselves the day after retirement?

The answer we found is larger than life and sitting right in front of us in the C Street courtyard of the Harry S Truman Building.

In thinking about what would be a suitable gift to replace the retirement plaque, pin and charm that are clearly from another era, we rapidly dispensed with gold watches, medals and pins. We looked at sister agencies—CIA, NSA, DOD. We wanted something unique to the Department, timeless, gender

neutral, décor neutral, unbreakable, affordable and, importantly, something that conveyed a deep sense of thanks.

We have been hinting at where we were going with the logo on the mastheads of RNet, the Annuity Benefits Calculator, the Personal Benefits Statement, Annuitant Employee Express and the EP+ programs. This unique Department icon met all the criteria. We chose the Marshall M. Fredericks “Expanding Universe” sculpture as the symbol of the future that is retirement. The issue, then, was how to deliver this in the form of a retirement gift.

There are no maquettes of the sculpture. Several hundred pictures and a computer regeneration later, we had a virtual maquette. Beth Krane, an artistic director from Awards.com, reproduced the sculpture in its most minute, starry detail in a laser-engraved pure crystal block. The reproduction, sitting on a square of black marble, is weighty, speaking to a meaningful career. It is light and transparent, looks to the future and is unique to the Department. It is timeless, décor and gender neutral and, for a business built around moving, unbreakable.

Starting January 15, every retiring Foreign Service and Civil Service employee will receive this unique engraved crystal sculpture as the centerpiece of a new retirement recognition package.

There were moments of comic relief as we struggled to come up with the new idea. We did our due diligence on the inscription on the bronze plaque in the courtyard, since the inscription will be included in a presentation card describing the sculpture. To our astonishment, the sculptor’s bronze middle initial, “W,” was not the same as on the Marshall M. Fredericks web site. Several days and calls later, a tale emerged about a guy at the foundry who inverted the M during the sculpture’s refurbishing. Today, thanks to A/OPR, the sculpture sports a brand-new plaque ready for retirees holding their crystal reproductions, who will have their photo taken in front of the real thing.

But that is not all.

Employees with 25 years or more of service who receive the Secretary’s Career Achievement Award have until now received a medal. Instead, these employees will, in addition to the sculpture, receive a 3 x 5 U.S. flag flown at the Department in honor of their retirement. A/OPR generously took on the task of flying 600 flags per year for retiring

IN APPRECIATION

DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES NEW RETIREMENT CAREER RECOGNITION
STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVID B. DLOUHY



Top: Foreign and Civil Service retirees with 25 years or more of federal service now receive the Secretary's Career Achievement Award; "Expanding Universe" engraved crystal sculpture; and a U.S. flag flown at the Department in honor of the retiree, with certificate and presentation case. **Bottom:** Foreign and Civil Service retirees with less than 25 years of federal service receive the new Secretary's Retirement Recognition Award and "Expanding Universe" engraved crystal sculpture.

employees. The flag will be delivered in a clear Lucite display case with an attached certificate.

Again, Beth Krane came to the rescue as we struggled with how to present the flag. We wanted something that was modern, in keeping with the tenor and look of the crystal sculpture, and something that would focus on the meaning of the flag. She took on the design challenge and produced a flag presentation case that is unique. It can be displayed any one of three ways and the certificate holder is built in.

The Secretary's Career Achievement Award is awarded to all Foreign Service and Civil Service employees and Locally Employed staff who meet the 25 years of service require-

ment. This award, signed by the Secretary, will continue as the Secretary's personal recognition of retiring employees. Krane also designed a new frame for the certificate that complements the crystal sculpture and flag case. These three items, accompanied by a presentation card about the sculpture, constitute the new retirement recognition package for employees with 25 years or more of service.

Employees with less than 25 years of service did not previously have a retirement certificate. Nor did retiring Locally Employed Staff employees. Starting January 15, Foreign Service and Civil Service employees with less than 25 years of service will receive, in addition to the crystal sculpture, a new certificate. The Secretary's Retirement Recognition Award will be signed by the Secretary and presented in an embossed leather folder.

Locally Employed Staff employees worldwide will receive through their embassies a new Department of State Retirement Recognition Certificate signed by the ambassador.

The Bureau of Human Resources, working with the 26 executive offices in the Department, has designed new and streamlined delivery systems for the retirement gifts. Awards.com will deliver the crystal sculpture, flags and certificates directly to retiring employees. Bureaus will directly deliver the Secretary's Career Achievement Award and the Secretary's Retirement Recognition Certificate. New forms have been added to the retirement application to facilitate delivery of the

recognition package and to ensure that everyone gets all elements of the package. The funding will come from HR.

What retirement recognition gift do you give to people who have dedicated their life to government service, risked life and limb, moved constantly, given up friends and family and acted quietly and heroically to advance our nation's interests over decades of service? Only something heroic in scale and concept, something that looks ahead not back, something that is intended to symbolize the vitality, immensity, order and mystery of the universe. ■

The author is director of the Office of Retirement.

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The State Department team at the President's Quality Award Ceremony: (from left) Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda Tagliatela; Sara Craig; Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary Ruth Whiteside; Rob Nolan; OMB Director Joshua Bolton; Chris Hoh; Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore; OPM Director Linda Springer; Ruben Torres; Director General W. Robert Pearson; John Long; OPM State Liaison Gail Redd; David Dlouhy; Marianne Myles; and Margaret Pearson.

By David B. Dlouhy

The Office of Personnel Management announced in December that the Department of State had won two of the four prestigious 2005 Presidential Quality Awards. The Department's winning nominations for its innovative skills inventory, Employee Profile Plus (EP+), and for Strategic Management of Human Capital were selected from among 47 government-wide nominations.

Presidential Quality Awards are the highest awards given to Executive Branch agencies for management excellence. The awards were established in 1988 under the Reagan administration to recognize excellence in quality and productivity. They applied to the public sector similar criteria used for the Malcolm Baldwin National Quality Improvement Awards. In 2002, the Presidential Quality Awards were adapted to recognize the federal agencies and projects that best implement the objectives of President George W. Bush's Management Agenda.

A distinguished panel of judges from public, private and nonprofit organizations reviewed the nominations. They sent their recommendations to OPM for review, and OPM's recommendations

were then forwarded to the White House. The President decided to recognize the State Department as a model for the entire Federal government.

This year, there were three separate categories for the awards:

- Specific innovative and exemplary projects and practices;
- Overall agency achievement in each one of the five government-wide initiatives outlined in the PMA: human capital, competitive sourcing, improved financial performance, expanded electronic government and budget and performance integration; and
- Overall agency management and how effectively the different management systems are integrated.

At an award ceremony held Dec. 13 at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Department was recognized for energizing the management of its employees and for finding innovative ways of utilizing their skills to meet changing conditions and demands. Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore accepted the awards on behalf of the Department.

The three EP+ suite of applications for the first time brings more than 20,000 Foreign Service, Civil Service and re-employed annuitant active employees and 23,000 Foreign Service and Civil

Service annuitants into a single, unified searchable database. The Department is currently expanding EP+ to also include family members of Foreign Service employees overseas and locally engaged staff at Embassies around the world.

The Department's award nomination notes that, thanks to EP+, "the Department now knows its workforce and the totality of capabilities as reflected in both the active and retiree populations."

The nomination also noted that the Department's program can be adapted for use by other Executive branch agencies. Director General W. Robert Pearson briefed the Chief Human Capital Officers Council in September on the program's capabilities and reaffirmed the Department's readiness to make EP+ available to their agencies.

The Department is continuing its effort to spread the EP+ across the Executive branch to create complementary systems that can improve personnel management, effective use of employee talent and government response to crises. ■

The author is administrator of the Department's Foreign Service Pension Fund and director of the Office of Retirement.

State Office Leads U.S.-China Meeting on Science and Technology

BY TAMARA L. SCOTT

U.S. and Chinese delegations recently met to discuss bilateral activities under the U.S.-China Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation and plan for the future.

The meeting, known as the Executive Secretaries Meeting, reviewed ongoing and possible new areas of cooperation under the agreement, which operates as the bilateral framework on a broad range of science and technology matters.



With delegation members in the background, Jin Xiaoming and George Dragnich shake hands to mark a successful meeting.

The ESM was held at the Center of Marine Biotechnology in Baltimore in late October. The 42-member, 17-agency U.S. delegation was led by the Office of Science & Technology Cooperation in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental Scientific Affairs.

"These meetings are important for the United States and China because they allow us to communicate about important scientific and technological issues affecting both countries," said Office Director George Dragnich, who served as U.S. executive secretary for the meeting.

Dr. Rebecca Gardner, international activities director at the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy,

noted that the meeting usually determines the agenda for the ministerial-level Joint Commission Meeting. That meeting will be co-chaired by Dr. John Marburger for the United States and the Chinese Minister of Science & Technology.

"This ESM was one of the most productive, highlighting the many accomplishments in our cooperation and assisting us in the planning of future activities of mutual benefit, many of which involve several U.S. agencies and Chinese ministries," she said.

Director General Jin Xiaoming of the Department of International Cooperation for China's Ministry of Science & Technology called the meeting the best he had attended since 1981. He urged more frequent meetings of the working group, perhaps quarterly. The group now meets biennially, alternating with the biennial Joint Commission meetings.

"These meetings are an opportunity for U.S. and Chinese scientists and technical agency administrators to see the overall picture on cooperation in the scientific and technical realm," said Pamela Bates, STC's senior officer for Asia. "This lets agencies on both sides make new contacts with scientists who are working in related areas of interest."

This year's meeting, which covered a wide range of projects in areas including energy, public health, clean air and water, agricultural science, information technology and natural resource management, had breakout sessions on areas such as avian flu and science education.

The Chinese delegation visited the University of Maryland's Institute of Human Virology and the research labs of the Center of Marine Biotechnology. ■

The author is a presidential management fellow and foreign affairs officer in the Office of Science & Technology Cooperation.

Noontime Concerts: From Classical to Broadway to Elvis

By John Bentel

The recent noontime concerts hosted by the Foreign Affairs Recreation Association and the State of the Arts Cultural Series included a pianist, soprano, clarinetists and a very believable Elvis impersonator!

It was a real treat listening to the La Fourza Clarinet Quartet, consisting of Jean-François Bescond, Edna Huang, Lori Fowser and Phyllis Crossen-Richardson, along with drummer Gregory Herron. La Fourza's lively selections began with Early Hungarian Dances by Ferenc Farkas and concluded with selections from Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Their precision reflected many years of collective talent.

Seventeen-year-old talents Caroline Dooner, soprano, and Daniel Schlosberg, piano, presented a delightful concert that spanned both classical and Broadway genres. Both of these fine musicians are studying under Irina Yurovskaya, a recent performer in the recital series. Daniel sensitively rendered Brahms, Mompou and Chopin, while Caroline sang selections from *Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Music Man*. Her lovely voice was delicately balanced by Daniel's piano accompani-



All shook up! Elvis impersonator Jeff Krick fires up the audience with some classic rock n' roll.

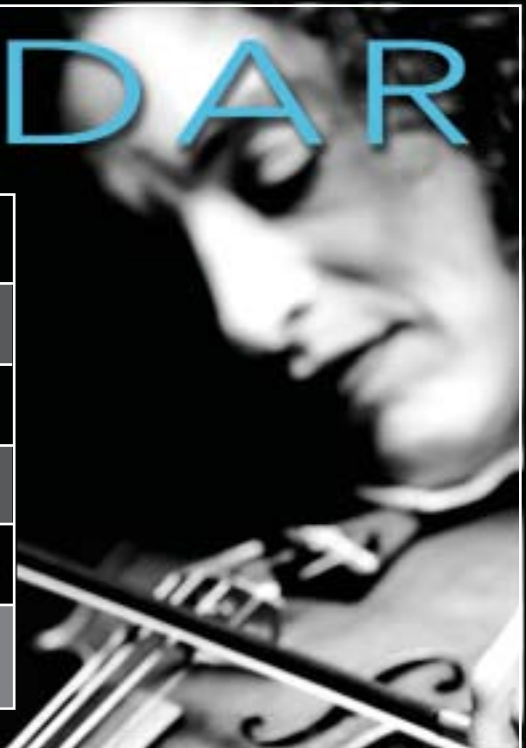
ment. They received prolonged applause from an appreciative audience.

The Department has not been the same since Elvis paid a visit. Jeff Krick wowed a large and enthusiastic audience with his tribute to Elvis. His voice and Elvis-like movements fired everyone up. He thrilled some by presenting them with scarves, much as the King himself used to do. ■

The author is a computer specialist in the Executive Secretariat.

CALENDAR

January 11	Dr. Jenni Cook, soprano, and Arlene Kies, piano
January 25	Michael Parker, tuba and piano accompaniment
February 8	Tonya Gipson, gospel artist, Exhibit Hall
February 22	TBD
March 8	TBD, Exhibit Hall
Performances are on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium.	



Jerry Oberndorfer of the Bureau of European Affairs takes to the gym to become a Healthier Fed.



Healthier Feds

New DOS Service Promotes Healthy Competition

By Health Promotion and Wellness Program Staff,
Office of Medical Services

Can Department employees improve their health and fitness? The Office of Medical Services is providing a brand-new service, “Healthier Feds—DOS 2006,” to help them do just that.

The intent is to encourage employees to take charge of their own health and become healthier.

In autumn of 2004, the Office of Personnel Management kicked off the Healthier Feds program. An eight-week competition was initiated among various agencies to determine whose employees were best at maintaining some sort of physical activity or exercise five days per week for 30 minutes or more. Many State employees participated and the Department came in 14th out of the 30 participating agencies.

Now, using the same web-based mechanism, MED is encouraging all Department employees to participate in the 2006 Healthier Feds Presidential Challenge.

The challenge provides a simple way to log your daily physical activity and see your progress via an OPM-designed web-based program. You can track how you are doing compared to your goals and, if you want, to others in your age group, in your office/bureau, post or any other group you choose. All comparisons are done with anonymous data.

The results of the program will be published in mid-2006 by Department health units worldwide.

Why should you participate? To encourage yourself and others to be physically active and lead healthier, happier and more productive lives.

Sometimes we **sit in our office and eat a package of chips** because it's easier than walking around the corner for **a healthy lunch**.

Many diseases are associated with obesity, poor nutrition and physical inactivity. As the Healthier Feds web site notes, physical activity is one of the most enjoyable, cost-effective and simple ways to prevent illness. It is also one of the best ways to control an illness you already have.

Regular, moderate-intensity physical activity can lower the risk of heart disease or heart attack, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, diabetes, stroke, osteoporosis and even depression. Regular activity strengthens the heart, lungs, bones and muscles and helps in handling stress, sleeping better, looking better and feeling more upbeat.

While we all know the benefits of exercise, we may get busy and convince ourselves we don't have the time today. Sometimes we sit in our office and eat a package of chips because it's easier than walking around the corner for a healthy lunch. Sometimes, when the arthritis is flaring up, we'd rather go home and put our feet up than exercise. What can we do to change these everyday behaviors?

Being physically active takes a commitment. If you aren't ready to make a commitment, thinking about making a change can be the first important step, along with giving yourself positive reinforcement.

When you are ready, decide you want to make a change. Make note of your baseline health and fitness status. Prepare for the change. If you have any chronic health ailments, see your doctor or health unit first for recommendations.

Determine the obstacles to physical activity and how you will work around them. Traveling? Maybe you can do calisthenics in your room. Is it too cold, hot, rainy, snowy, dangerous or polluted outside? How about a corridor or stairwell walk?

Set appropriate, reachable goals. Make a plan. Monitor yourself. And revise your plan when necessary.

The objective of the challenge is for Department employees to make a commitment to themselves to be physically active. Studies have shown that keeping track of activity and monitoring progress may be useful in maintaining motivation.

In addition, just for fun—fun is an important part of maintaining good health and fitness—a little collegial or group competition may help maintain motivation on those days when you'd really rather go home and be a couch potato.

January is a traditional time for making resolutions, so why not resolve to become slimmer, trimmer, physically active and more hale and hearty in 2006?

To find out more about the program and sign up, go to www.presidentschallenge.org.

Sign up as part of group DOS 2006.

To start your own group, check out "register a group" on the web site.

Contact a Department health unit for more information. ■

Free Pedometers!

MED's Health Promotion Program, via three domestic occupational health units, recently encouraged participation in the Healthier Feds program by providing free pedometers to those who signed up. Participants were weighed, had their body mass index determined, blood pressure measured and personal goals discussed in small groups.

Participants were encouraged to monitor their health behaviors for the month of December to gain a better understanding of their wellness and make a determination about what they would like to improve. They received a log sheet to monitor food consumption and mood. Although these are not a part of the Healthier Feds program, they are important markers to track in one's quest for a healthier lifestyle.



Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore, center, and employees from around the Department hold up their pedometers after a short walk on the seventh floor of Main State in early December.

APPOINTMENTS



U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda. Michael R. Arietti of Connecticut, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda. Previously, he was director of the Office of West African Affairs, where he worked to bring about peace in Liberia. His other overseas assignments include Geneva, Lusaka, Sweden,

Australia and Iran. Before joining the Department, he served in the Peace Corps in India. He is married and has one daughter.



U.S. Ambassador to Jordan. David M. Hale of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Previously, he was chargé d'affaires and deputy chief of mission in Jordan. Before that, he was director of the Office of Israel and Palestinian Affairs, deputy chief of mission in Beirut and executive

assistant to the Secretary. His other overseas assignments include Bahrain and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.



U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay. James Caldwell Cason of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay. Previously, he was chief of mission at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. His other overseas assignments include Kingston, Tegucigalpa, San Salvador, La Paz, Panama City,

Montevideo, Milan, Maracaibo and Lisbon. He is married and has two sons.



Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs. John Hillen of Virginia, a businessman and author, is the new Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs. Previously, he had been a senior executive for public and private technology concerns. Earlier, he held fellowships at several public policy research institutes and authored or edited several books on international security. He was a

contributing editor to the *National Review*. He served in combat in the Army during the 1991 Persian Gulf War.



U.S. Ambassador to Togo. David B. Dunn of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Togolese Republic. Previously, he was principal officer in Johannesburg, and before that ambassador to Zambia. His other overseas postings include Jamaica, Tunisia, France, Burundi, Mauritius, Tanzania,

Zambia and South Africa. He is married and has two sons.



U.S. Ambassador to Jamaica. Brenda LaGrange Johnson of New York, a business executive and philanthropist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to Jamaica. Previously, she was a partner with BrenMer Industries, importing and marketing consumer products. In 2002, President Bush appointed her to the Advisory Council to the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the

Performing Arts, and in 2004 she was appointed to the Board of Trustees. She also served on the American Cancer Society board of directors. She is married and has four children and four grandchildren.



U.S. Ambassador to Honduras. Charles A. Ford of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras. Until recently, he served as senior adviser to the deputy assistant secretary for International Operations at the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service. His other overseas assignments include

Brussels, Caracas, London, Guatemala, Barcelona and Buenos Aires. He is married and has two children.



U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica. Mark Langdale of Texas, a businessman, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Costa Rica. Before his appointment, he was president of Posadas USA, Inc., the U.S. subsidiary of a hotel company that operates in Latin America. He co-founded CapRock Communications Corp., a communications provider in the southwestern United States. He also

was chairman of the Texas Department of Economic Development and practiced law for 10 years. He is married and has two children.

APPOINTMENTS



Chief of Mission-Designate to Cuba.

Michael E. Parmley of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new Chief of Mission-Designate for the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. Previously, he was on the faculty of the National War College and before that served as senior adviser to Ambassador Khalilzad for the Afghan presidential elections. His other overseas postings include Paris, Sarajevo, the U.S. Mission to the European Union, Bucharest, Morocco and Spain. Before joining the Department, he was with the Peace Corps in Colombia. He is married and has two children.



U.S. Ambassador to Korea.

Alexander R. Vershbow of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea. From 2001 to 2005, he was ambassador to the Russian Federation. Before that, he was ambassador to NATO. He was also senior director for European Affairs at the National Security Council. His other overseas assignments include London and Geneva. He is married.

RETIREMENTS

CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENTS

Broe, Patricia A.	Nestico, Joseph F.
Cestero, Mildred	Newlin, Delia M.
Davis, William M.	Ochoa, Lucille I.
Fischel, Stephen K.	Peters, William T.
Fischer, Robert Lucas	Rappa, Angela M.
Harrick, Philip J.	Roeder Jr., Larry Winter
Krips, Charles G.	Rust, Dean F.
Lamar, Mary C.	Toyer, Elaine M.
Markus, Kathleen F.	Turnbull, Mary Elizabeth
Metz, Carol Jane	Washington, Carrie M.

FOREIGN SERVICE RETIREMENTS

Amir, Nancy L.	Guss, Brian H.	Ojamaa, Elokai
Audroue, Kenneth R.	Hamilton, John Randle	Olson, Guy E.
Bauduin, Sherry L.	Hardesty, Steven A.	Otis, Sarah Kellogg
Beaman, Mark E.	Hartwell, Stephen Richard	Pryor, Elizabeth Brown
Carlson, Brian E.	Hastings, Norman Slote	Rault, Sharon S.
Carper, Jeremy L.	Hayes, Patrick R.	Reed, Rickey
Colantonio, Andrew J.	Hibler, Nathan L.	Root, William G.
Copenhaver, Barry F.	Hilliard Jr., Joseph	Sarisky, David D.
Corbett, Joan Ellen	Hogard, Stephen B.	Schofield, William Potter
Covington, Philip Stanhope	Holzman, John C.	Schroeder, Anita G.
Daly, Timothy D.	Howard, Linda S.	Shippy, Amelia Ellen
Dembski, Sandra A.	Keene, Dennis T.	Sigler, Mark A.
Deshazo, Joyce A.	Lauterbach, Steven M.	Smith, Edward T.
Dress, Alice Amelia	Marandino, Gerard Eustace	Snellgrove, Trevor Andrew
Dunham, Sharon Pamela	Martensen, Ronnie Lee	Sockwell, Robert E.
Edwards, Carlos L.	Maseda, Fred A.	Springer, Charlette R.
Elam-Thomas, Harriet Lee	Mason, Matthew C.	Varner, Rebecca J.
Estes, Bonita	Masson, Surinder	Wall, Philip R.
Fendrick, Reed J.	Mayhew, Jonathan C.	Weierbach, Cornelia Miller
Ferguson, James Gerard	McNeal, Douglas B.	Wenger, Aleta
Frost, Gregory T.	Morris, John D.	Wilson, Floyd L.
Gallagher, Thomas	Murray, Robert Bruce	Zelle, Susan W.
Green, Mason S.	Napper, Larry C.	

O B I T U A R I E S

Robert C. Friel, 63, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 20 of cancer in Stuart, Fla. His overseas postings included London, Nicosia, Paris and Dublin. Before joining the Department, he served in the Navy for 10 years.

Edward John Hunter, 74, a retired employee of the U.S. Information Agency, died Oct. 16 of cancer in Calistoga, Calif. He served in the Navy. After joining USIA, he wrote, directed and produced documentary motion pictures. Later, he directed projects for the agency's exhibits division. He retired in 1984. He was a talented amateur magician.

Elinor L. Murphy, 84, a retired Foreign Service specialist, died Nov. 23 in Sarasota, Fla. She joined the Department in 1957 and served overseas in London, Amman, Kuala Lumpur and Tokyo, where she was executive assistant to the late Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson. She returned with him to Washington and continued to serve him, commuting to Geneva when he was chief U.S. negotiator at the SALT talks.



Robert P. Richardson, 79, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 3 of ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He joined the Department in 1946 and served overseas in Cairo, Bern, New Delhi, Moscow, London, Nairobi, Beirut, Karachi, Bonn, Manila and Paris.

Anthea S. de Rouville, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Oct. 3 in Washington, D.C. She served overseas in Brussels, Paris, London and Bern. At the time of her retirement in 1987, she was vice president of the American Foreign Service Association. After retirement, she was a volunteer at the George Washington University Hospital.

Marvin Sorkin, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 3 of heart failure in Oakmont by Santa Rosa, Calif. After serving in the Army during World War II, he joined the Department in 1947 and opened the U.S. Information Service post in Salonika, Greece. He also served overseas in Vienna, Stuttgart and Berlin, where he retired as deputy director of RIAS (Radio in the American Sector).

Alexander "Al" Sullivan, 75, a retired Civil Service employee, died Nov. 4 of respiratory failure in Neptune, N.J. He served in the Army in the early 1950s. He was the White House correspondent for the U.S. Information Agency's Wireless File for more than 30 years, from President Johnson to President Clinton. His duties took him to all 50 states and six continents. After retirement, he wrote novels. He loved history, politics and travel.

Jeter Williamson, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 23 in Greensboro, N.C. He served in the Army in World War II and was police chief in Greensboro before joining the government. His overseas postings included Manila, Bangkok, Riyadh and Da Nang. He retired in 1974.



Mimmi T. Wolle, former wife of retired Ambassador William D. Wolle, died Nov. 12 in Bethesda, Md., after an extended illness. She had Parkinson's disease. She met her husband in Baghdad and accompanied him to six postings in the Middle East, as well as Manchester and Nairobi, from 1955 to 1981. She founded the American Women's Group in Oman and developed a thrift store for disadvantaged families in Muscat.

IN THE EVENT OF DEATH

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960.

LYING IN STATE: GET OUT OF OFFICE MESSAGE

IT'S AWFULLY LATE,
EDWINA - DON'T YOU
EVER LEAVE THE
OFFICE?



WELL, I'LL BE GOING TO
THE VOUCHER OFFICE
TOMORROW, BUT I'M
BRINGING MY BLACKBERRY!

DON'T YOU HAVE
ANY OUTSIDE
INTERESTS?



OH, LIKE OTHER BUREAUS?
WELL, I HAVE BEEN GETTING
UP TO SPEED ON THE
PORTFOLIOS IN
ACCORDION AFFAIRS...



EDWINA, I CAN'T
HELP NOTICE THE
HOT PLATE - ARE
YOU LIVING IN YOUR
OFFICE?



ONLY UNTIL I CATCH UP ON
THESE E-MAILS, FILE THESE
CABLES, ALPHABETIZE THOSE
TASKINGS, SHRED THE INFO MEMOS
ON WHEREABOUTS OF ELVIS - NO
TIME TO USE THE HOT PLATE,
BUT YOU KNOW THE
BISQUICK IS FINE
RIGHT OUT OF
THE BOX...



WHAT ABOUT TAKING
A LITTLE BREAK TO GO
OUT AND HAVE A LIFE?



UM, IS THAT
A TASKING?



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